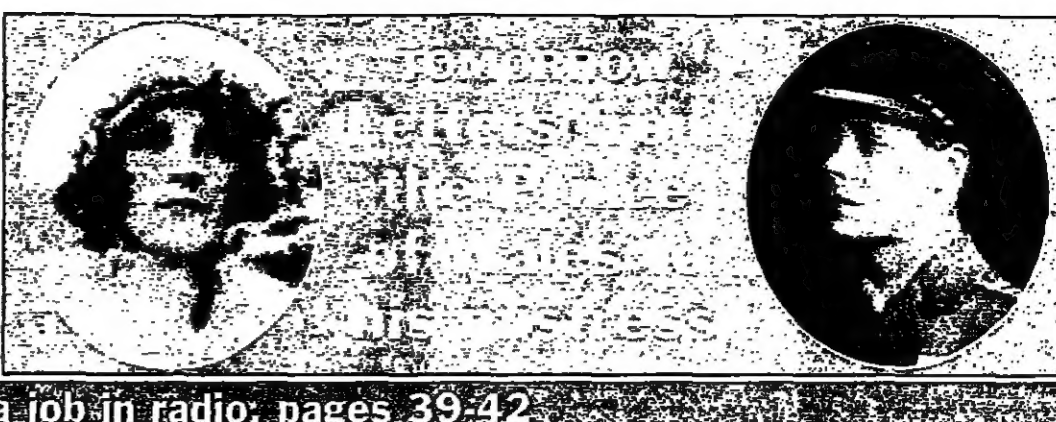


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The Net closes in on Clinton

BY BRONWEN MADDOK IN WASHINGTON

THE explosive report that could end Bill Clinton's presidency is set to be broadcast to the world on the Internet this afternoon, as pressure grows on him to resign or face impeachment.

The 445-page Starr report, which focuses entirely on the President's affair with Monica Lewinsky, is understood to allege that he is guilty of perjury, obstruction of justice, witness tampering and abuse of power. It is said to include details of the sexual acts he performed with Ms Lewinsky and to conclude with a dozen grounds for impeachment.

The report could also provide grounds for the indictment of some of the President's closest friends and confidants, including the power-broker Vernon Jordan and the White House deputy counsel Bruce Lindsey.

One of the strongest of the cases against the President is believed to be that he committed perjury in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case, lying under oath in January and again when he gave evidence to Mr Starr last month.

Much of the rest of the list, according to reports, is made up of allegations that Mr Clinton obstructed justice by stonewalling Mr Starr's inquiries. But "subornation of perjury" — the particularly devastating charge that he encouraged others, including Ms Lewinsky, to lie about the



Kenneth Starr yesterday after delivering his verdict on the President in 36 boxes of 'dynamite'

hangs on to the shreds of power until the end of his term in 2000.

Last night, the White House was dismayed and demoralised, but Mr Clinton was said to be determined to remain in office. His spokesman, Mike McCurry, said that he had heard no discussion that the President had considered resigning and yesterday showed that Mr Clinton continues to enjoy the support of just under 60 per cent of the people.

Mr Clinton's lawyers are furious that they have been rebuffed by Mr Starr and the House in their requests to see the report and issue a formal defence before publication. The White House is afraid that ordinary voters jamming the Internet tonight will be misled by its status as a congressional document into reading it as an impartial report.

Mr Clinton's lawyer, David Kendall, has described the report as a one-sided, biased assembly of uncorroborated stories, pointing out that it contains hearsay and anecdotes, and that none of the witnesses — who include Ms Lewinsky and her former friend Linda Tripp, whose tapes of their conversations set the scandal rolling in January — have been cross-examined by the President's side.

Last night the White House was clinging to faint hopes last night that a legal challenge could delay publication until Monday. But with the chances of that looking slim, the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives was preparing to retire today to begin debating whether there are grounds to remove Mr Clinton from office.

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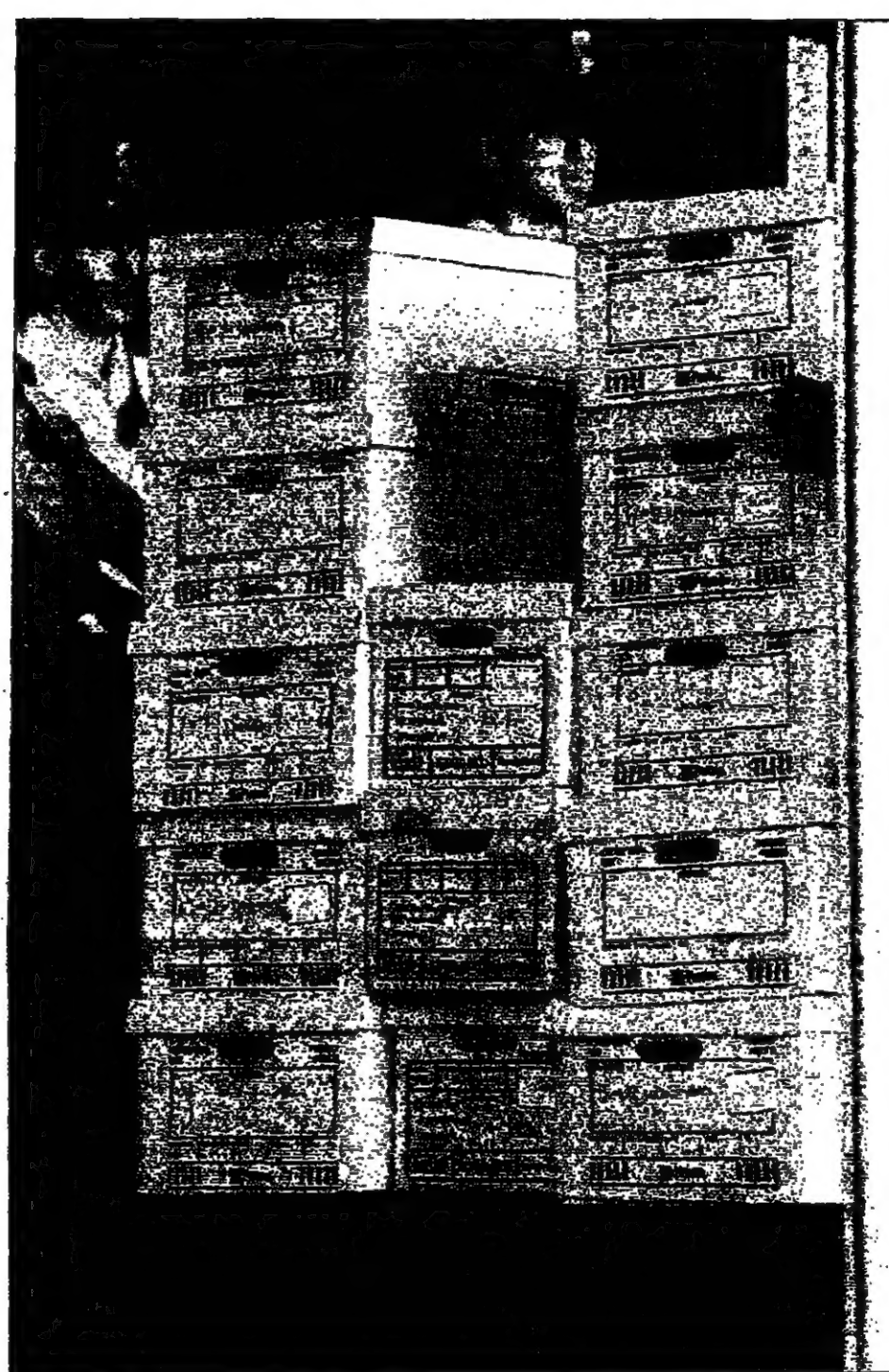
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President.

Mr Clinton himself made yet another public statement of regret yesterday, using a meeting of young scientists in the Roosevelt Room of the White House to ask for "understanding and forgiveness and commitment". He also called ten Senate Democrats to the Oval Office to plead for their support.

In a new, desperate strategy, he is seizing every opportunity to express regret and remorse for the affair with the 22-year-old former White House trainee. He may do so again today when he hosts a White House breakfast for the nation's religious leaders, and he faces a tense meeting with the Cabinet — the first gathering of all the members since his emphatic denial of an affair in January — when he is expected to make a further heartfelt apology to those who stood in the rain to repeat his denials, notably the Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright.

"He's got a lot of amends to make, and he'll be making those amends to all and everyone," Mr McCurry said.

There were signs yesterday that his appeal to the loyalty of senior Democrats was having some success. Vice President Al Gore, who has been conspicuously absent and silent during the worsening crisis, made his most forthright defence of the President yesterday. Referring to Mr Clinton as "my friend and our President", he told a meeting of the Democratic Business Council that "his policies have been manifestly good for the United States of America and those policies must be continued for the good of America."

At the same time, Tom Daschle, leader of the Democratic minority in the Senate, called yesterday's White House meeting "constructive and helpful", and said: "The President's story needs to be heard and we need to get the facts. So as well as co-operation on the President's side, we need fairness from Congress."

The senators asked Mr Clinton whether more damaging revelations might break. His answer was that, no, there were no surprises.

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Carlton bid, page 52

Weekend jail for 'minor offences'

Liferaft drowning

Bank defies rates pressure

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Weekend jail for 'minor offences'

Liferaft drowning

US could view confession tape

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

AMERICANS could one day see the videotape of President Clinton admitting to a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky. Congressmen will spend the next few days sifting 36 boxes of damning and highly embarrassing material relating to Mr Clinton's repeated encounters with Ms Lewinsky in a small room behind the Oval Office.

Most damaging to Mr Clinton may be the 140-page conclusion. Last night congressmen were planning to review this material before deciding who among their colleagues, or the wider public, should be allowed to see it.

The report is understood to paint a picture of a pattern of lying by Mr Clinton. In particular, it alleges that he is guilty of lying under oath in the deposition he gave in the sexual harassment lawsuit brought against him by Paula Jones. It also says he perjured himself again in the grand jury testimony last month in which he said that his evidence in that case had been legally accurate but misleading.

He is accused of using government employees to help sustain his lies. His dealings with Miss Lewinsky and Betty Currie, his secretary, both witnesses in the case, are examined in damning detail. The report dwells on how he approved a false press statement on the day the Lewinsky affair broke in January and allowed his aides to launch legal moves to block access to key witnesses.

The evidence has been supplied to support Mr Starr's report which he accuses the President of being a serial liar who committed perjury and obstructed justice as he tried to hide his affair with Miss Lewinsky. The 445-page report also describes incidents of witness tampering and abuse

of power which the prosecutor believes are grounds for impeachment of the President.

The report, the first by a special prosecutor in which impeachment of a President has been recommended, opens with a 25-page summary of the most damning evidence and the grounds for impeachment. The bulk consists of 280 pages of narrative evidence on Mr Clinton's repeated encounters with Ms Lewinsky in a small room behind the Oval Office.

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Yeltsin makes popular choice

Russia's political stalemate ended in a compromise when President Yeltsin chose Yevgeny Primakov, his former Foreign Minister, to be Russia's next Prime Minister. The appointment was widely welcomed and Mr Primakov's appointment is expected to be confirmed today. Page 17

Branson joins balloon rival

Richard Branson teamed up with Steve Fossett, his former rival, to pursue their shared dream of becoming the first people to fly around the world in a balloon. They plan to take off from Morocco in November. Page 6

IRA arms plan

As David Trimble and Gerry Adams heralded a new era of co-operation, the Government planned extensive demilitarisation in Northern Ireland to encourage the IRA disarmament that must start soon if the peace process is to succeed. Page 6

Arsenal join Manchester United in takeover race

By JASON NUSSE

THE battle for control of English football exploded into new life yesterday when Carlton Communications, the ITV company which makes *The Bill* and *Peak Practice*, revealed it is in talks that could lead to a takeover of Arsenal.

The team which beat Manchester United to the Premiership title and won the FA Cup last season, would be worth less than half the £623 million BSkyB had agreed to pay for the Manchester club only 24 hours before.

City analysts were predicting that Carlton would have to pay only about £250 million for Arsenal while some were saying that BSkyB had secured a real bargain with the price paid for Manchester United.

Michael Green, Carlton's chairman, comes from an Arsenal-supporting family and is a friend of the club's deputy chairman, David



Carlton.

Dein. However sentiment showed no place in business as it emerged that Carlton had already held talks with Arsenal's arch rivals Tottenham Hotspur but could not strike a deal.

Liverpool and Leeds United were also at the centre of bid rumours and Aston Villa confirmed that it is talking to "a communications firm".

Arsenal is controlled by four directors who hold 70 per cent of the shares. Green may be happy with a stake in the club

and a seat on the board, so gaining a seat at the negotiating table as the Premiership works out how it will divide up its lucrative TV rights after the current deal with BSkyB runs out in 2001.

Arsenal fans showed mixed reactions to the Carlton move. Many were sad that the club might sell out but felt that a deal was inevitable. Lynette Dowden, a student from Hockley, near Southend, who was queuing outside the Arsenal's Highbury ground for a tour yesterday, said: "I suppose now Manchester United have done it, we have to as well. But it's all money these days, it's not the football that matters any more."

Another fan, Shelley Johnson, from Braintree in Essex, said: "I don't particularly like it but if Manchester United get all this money from Sky they might run away with everything. We've got to compete."

Shares soar, page 11
Carlton bid, page 52

Bank defies rates pressure

Shares and the pound fell sharply in the wake of the Bank of England decision to leave interest rates on hold at 7.5 per cent. The Bank's Monetary Policy Committee defied growing pressure for a cut but reassured exporters that it would not raise interest rates again. Page 27

Weekend jail for 'minor offences'

Minor offenders could be allowed to keep their jobs and serve their sentences at weekends, according to a study on ways to relieve pressure on jails. The report says that rises in the prison population are "unsustainable". Page 13

Liferaft drowning

A sixth-former drowned unnoticed under a liferaft at a public school while pupils above him continued with a sea-survival exercise supervised by Royal Navy specialists. One exercise was on how to recover a body, an inquest was told. Page 9

The Tiffany Setting

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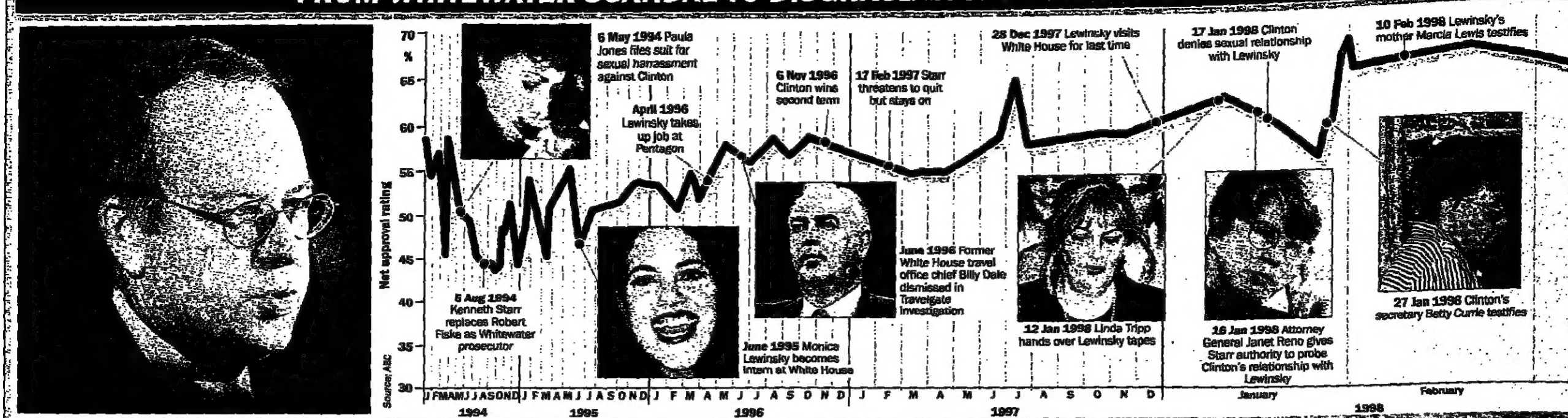
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FROM WHITEWATER SCANDAL TO DISGRACE IN THE WHITE HOUSE: HOW STARR'S INQUIRY



That woman ... and fatal miscalculation

President Clinton has been on the brink, starting into the political gloom many times before, but has always somehow defied the odds and leapt to safety. Now Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor, has pushed him to the biggest drop of all. Soon we will know if there is an escape route for the Clinton presidency.

As he teeters there, he may be reflecting on how it is that he finds himself in this pretty pass. After all, so many times we have seen him land on his feet, give that famous smirk and walk away, his troubles apparently behind him.

It has been a long road to this point. In 1994, amid controversy over Mr Clinton and his wife Hillary's links to the shady dealings of an Arkansas financier, James McDougal, the President asked the Attorney-General, Janet Reno, to appoint a prosecutor to investigate. The Clintons had been partners with Mr MacDougal in a property venture: Whitewater Development Corporation.

The very name Whitewater captured the imagination in a nation where Watergate was a word synonymous with corruption. But the investigation soon lost all but the most dedicated students. Nevertheless, the crucial factor was that the independent prosecutor had been established, and from that the unravelling to

Clinton's plight is the end of a long and tortuous ordeal. Damian Whitworth in Washington charts the bumpy episodes which have brought him to the edge

PRESIDENT ON THE PRECIPICE

potential catastrophe could begin. In August 1994 the prosecutor was replaced by Kenneth Starr, a high-flying Chicago lawyer and former Solicitor-General who was initially regarded favourably by the White House.

Earlier that summer, however, Mr Clinton had been hustled to the edge of one of those precipices by another force. In May, Paula Jones, a former clerk, had filed a suit for sexual harassment claiming that, one afternoon when Mr Clinton was Governor of Arkansas, she had been taken to his room by a state trooper and Mr Clinton had made a sexual advance. The charge was dismissed as "tabloid trash" by the President's lawyer, and James Carville, his skilful adviser, had dismissed her claims with typical venom. "Drag a \$100 bill through a trailer park and there's no telling what you'll find," he observed.

The following summer another woman came into the President's life. In June 1995 Monica Lewinsky, then 20,

arrived in the White House as an unpaid trainee. Mr Starr, inching forwards with an investigation into complicated and age-old financial affairs, could not have dreamed that he would end up questioning her about the details of sex acts she had performed with the President in the Oval Office.

In 1996 the investigation was broadened to include Travelgate, the accusations that seven members of the White House travel office were dismissed by the Clintons on trumped-up charges so that they could be replaced with cronies of the couple. Mr Starr also began investigating Filegate in which Mrs Clinton's billing records from the Rose Law Firm in Arkansas, which had been sought by Mr Starr for two years, mysteriously reappeared on a White House table.

In April 1996, Ms Lewinsky took a new job at the Pentagon and made a new friend, Linda Tripp. Over the following months she would be logged 37 times making visits to the

White House. In November, Mr Clinton defeated Bob Dole to sweep back into the White House as the first Democrat since Roosevelt to win a second term. The Republicans still controlled Congress but the economy was strong.

There had been convictions from Mr Starr's investigation, but the public seemed to be bored with the whole affair. In February 1997, Mr Starr said he was stepping down to take a job at a law school. But he quickly changed his mind.

In January this year depositions in the Paula Jones case began after the Supreme Court rejected the White House's claims that it should be delayed until the President left office. The nation was agog at the prospect that the President would have to reveal whether he had a distinguishing mark on his penis.

One of those who completed an affidavit for the Jones case saying she did not have sex with the President was Ms Lewinsky. Two days later, with a little help from Vernon Jordan, Mr Clinton's bosom

buddy, she was offered a job at Revlon in New York. Three days after that, Linda Tripp, who had been such a good listener, revealed why as she turned over 20 hours of surreptitiously taped conversations between the two.

Suddenly Mr Clinton's world speeded up. On January 16, Janet Reno secretly gave Mr Starr the authority to investigate the Lewinsky relationship. The next day Mr Clinton, who a few months earlier had been close to reaching an agreement with Paula Jones involving damages, gave a six-hour deposition which included a denial of sexual relations with Ms Lewinsky. His testimony was peppered with such phrases as "I don't recall".

The same day, January 17, Matt Drudge, a gossip columnist on the Internet, told the world about Ms Lewinsky and a feeding frenzy began. It was more than a week before Mr Clinton said he did not have sexual relations with "that woman". And over the next few weeks, as Ms Lewinsky's mother, Marcia Lewis, testified before the grand jury for six hours and Betty Currie, the President's secretary, was among his staff hauled in to explain Ms Lewinsky's frequent visits to the Oval Office, he held firm.

Kathleen Willey, a former White House volunteer, claimed on television in March she was groped by Mr Clinton, but then the Paula Jones case was dismissed by a federal judge.

But in July came a thunderbolt for Mr Clinton. Mr Starr issued a subpoena to make him testify. Then on July 28 Ms Lewinsky was offered broad immunity from prosecution in return for her full story in front of the Grand Jury. The next day Mr Clinton agreed to testify voluntarily.

Last month, 11 days apart, the two former intimates told the grand jury what had happened in the Oval Office. Ms Lewinsky said nothing publicly. Mr Clinton went on television the same day to admit that he had had a relationship with Ms Lewinsky that was "not appropriate" and "wrong".

But the most brilliant politician of his generation made a possibly fatal miscalculation. He did not use the "S" word — sorry. He attacked Mr Starr. Republicans condemned him, and over the next few days so did Democrats.

He has offered profuse apologies over recent days. But the question is whether he has done enough to win the support of fellow Democrats if impeachment proceedings begin. Or whether there are now too many former friends in that chasing pack ready to give him that final push.

First Lady's options, page 5
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Firm hand steadies financial tiller

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

AS SCANDAL swirls around the White House, distracting the staff, the US Treasury building next door on Pennsylvania Avenue is an oasis of businesslike calm.

This is due in large part to its solid leadership under Robert Rubin, 60, President Clinton's Treasury Secretary, and a figure of probity who continues to command respect from all sides in Washington for his stewardship of the Administration's financial policy and in keeping watch over economic turmoil in Russia, Asia and elsewhere. It is a quality that could be of growing significance in the coming months if Mr Clinton's effectiveness continues to decline.

Educated at Harvard, Yale and the London School of Economics, Mr Rubin is one

of those Democrats who ought by rights to be a Republican. He was formerly a power on Wall Street, where he was co-chairman of Goldman Sachs and on the board of directors of the New York Stock Exchange. Yet he and his wife Judith have long been firmly rooted in Democratic issues and economic policy.

It is to Mr Rubin's credit, in needing good relations with the Republicans controlling Congress, that he was never regarded as an FOB — Friend of Bill — who socialised with the Clintons. Indeed, he was thought to have seemed out of place when Mr Clinton, newly in office in 1993, invited his closest advisers to Camp David for a weekend of "bonding". Despite speculation about his future, Mr Rubin



Rubin: strongly rooted in Democratic policy

insists he is not leaving the Treasury and has no wish to go back to Wall Street even when he does.

Throughout the Lewinsky crisis, Mr Rubin has briefed Mr Clinton two or three times a week on Russia, Asia and the beleaguered lending policies

of the International Monetary Fund. Rubin aides insist that Mr Clinton's famous ability to compartmentalise problems has meant that he has been fully focused on the foreign financial rollercoasters.

Still, Mr Rubin faces a fight with Congress in getting the \$18 billion (\$11 billion) that the Administration seeks for re-funding of the IMF, of which the US is the biggest shareholder.

Mr Clinton owes Mr Rubin a lot in terms of maintaining financial stability. The two men met when Mr Clinton was still Governor of Arkansas. The Clinton vision of policies struck a chord with Mr Rubin, who set to work among his Wall Street friends to raise money for the Clinton campaign. His reward in the first term was to oversee the White House National Economic Council.



A disgraced Richard Nixon bids farewell to the White House after resigning in 1974

America relives the dark

SHADES OF NIXON

Washington: It is only 24 years since the foundations of the United States were last shaken by the threat of impeachment against a President (Ian Brodie writes).

Richard Nixon chose to resign in disgrace rather than face an impeachment trial in the Senate for his role in the White House cover-up of a break-in at Democratic party headquarters in the Watergate office complex.

Once again the republic is approaching the same critical point, with the possible impeachment of President Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky case. Writing the Constitution, the Founding Fathers decreed that a President and

other high officials could be impeached for "treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanours", followed by a trial in the Senate which, upon conviction by a two-thirds majority, would lead to removal from office.

Watergate was a much bigger criminal plot than the Lewinsky affair. Its goal was to bend the electoral process to Nixon's ends and to undermine his enemies. But there are analogies.

Nixon, like Mr Clinton, blamed his troubles

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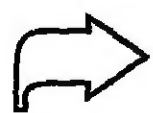
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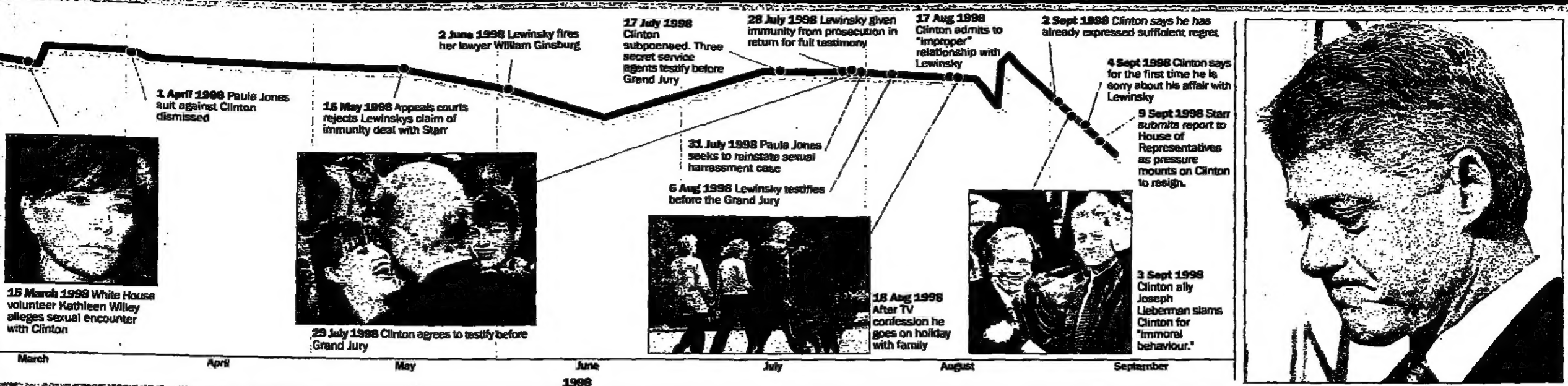
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UNCOVERED SEX IN THE OVAL ROOM AND TOOK THE PRESIDENT TO THE BRINK OF IMPEACHMENT



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Bill Clinton leaves Washington earlier this week for fundraising rallies in Florida

days of Watergate lies

on outside "savage destroyers and haters" out to get him. Hillary Clinton has complained of a "vast right-wing conspiracy" against her husband. Yet in both cases, the men were to blame for initiating their destruction.

Unlike Mr Clinton, Nixon was genuinely paranoid. By the time he became President, he had cast aside most of his most trusted aides and surrounded himself instead with hard men who became known as the "Berlitz Wall".

Nixon was politically popular and there was no need for the Watergate break-in or any of the other dirty tricks. In a series of trials, all the

Watergate plotters went to jail. As the others went off to prison, Nixon was left alone to face three articles of impeachment passed by the House Judiciary Committee in televised hearings.

Nixon did not wait for the full House to vote in his impeachment and made his resignation speech. The day after, Nixon spoke in a rambling way about his sainted mother and his problems. He never mentioned his loyal wife Pat, standing distraught beside him.

It had been a frightening time for Americans.

Comeback Kid plots moves in last chance saloon

BY BRONWEN MADDOX

PRESIDENT CLINTON is determined not to resign as the White House braces itself for America's reaction to the Starr report, his aides said yesterday.

But Mr Clinton is stunned by the growing clamour for his resignation or impeachment, and shocked by the worsening of his predicament in a matter of days.

Last week, in Moscow and Ireland, he and his dwindling team of advisers thought he could escape without even a formal censure by Congress. But the "presidential" aura which he hoped had clung to him after the summit evaporated back in Washington. Yesterday the options for the Comeback Kid to save himself were shrinking.

Mr Clinton was not exaggerating on Wednesday when he called these "the toughest days of my life". Last night, in a demoralised White House.

STRATEGY

his aides and lawyers were trying to map out a strategy for the comeback of his life.

But there were signs that the "grovel strategy" — frequent, public statements of contrition, as urged by a phalanx of senior Democrats on Wednesday — was too little, too late. His apologies look like desperate bids to save his skin, however emotional their content, several members of the Congress said.

This morning Mr Clinton is expected to make yet another apology as he hosts a long-planned breakfast for the nation's religious leaders. Later, he will attend a memorial service for the victims of the East African bombings of US embassies.

In a sign of how much events have accelerated beyond the White House, three weeks ago aides saw the prayer breakfast as a chance for a second presidential apology. Now, there is almost an apology a day. But that still appears not enough.

So confident was Mr Clinton on his return from Ireland last weekend that he dismissed suggestions of trying to strike a "plea bargain" with Congress — accepting formal rebuke or censure in return for repeated expressions of regret. Now, mere censure looks like a dream.

Congress studies 'dynamite boxes'

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

WHEN Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor, deposited the 36 "boxes of dynamite" on the steps of the Capitol, he legally transferred authority for the investigation to Congress.

Members of Congress met throughout the early hours of this morning to find a way of handling the 445-page report which will bridge the provisions of the US Constitution with the demands of the age of the Internet and television.

Newt Gingrich, House Speaker, last night called on members to "abstain from language which is personally abusive to the President", including references to illegal conduct or to particular sexual acts that Mr Clinton may have committed with Monica Lewinsky.

Mr Gingrich's appeal for "decorum in the debate" was drawn from the Founding Fathers' original rule book for Congress. But he had in mind also that congressional debates, normally watched only by pensioners, insomniacs and political enthusiasts, are now expected to get startlingly high ratings. Yet the subject is legally sensitive and potentially more sexually explicit than is normal in family viewing.

In a rarely seen spectacle,

members of the House of Representatives yesterday discovered that they could operate at "super-fast-track" speed, as one put it.

Within hours, they drafted a motion to allow the report to be published and to enable the Judiciary Committee to begin the formal debate on whether there are grounds to impeach President Clinton.

The first decisions on handling the report fell to the House Rules Committee, which had the tortuous task of deciding how to make available the contents of Mr Starr's document. There is a strong feeling on the Hill that, in a matter which could lead to the impeachment of the President, all of the report should be made available to all the members of Congress, and to the public.

Gerald Solomon, chairman

IMPEACHMENT

of the Rules Committee, was set to meet his committee yesterday afternoon to draw up a resolution authorising publication of the report. The resolution, which will be brought to the House floor for a vote this morning, was set to allow all of the report to be released, probably this afternoon.

The resolution would transfer official custody of Mr Starr's material to the Judiciary Committee. The committee, made up of 21 Republicans and 15 Democrats, will recommend to the House whether it thinks there are grounds for the President's impeachment. If a majority of the House agrees in a formal vote, the Senate will then consider the same question.

It would take the votes of 67 of the 100 senators to remove Mr Clinton from office.



The Judiciary Committee's homepage on website

Allies and enemies line up to assist or condemn

BY IAN BRODIE

IF THE President resigns or is forced out of office, the Constitution requires that he be succeeded by his Vice-President who, in turn, picks his own Vice-President, who must then be approved by a vote of Congress.

Around Washington, Al Gore is regarded as a capable, if stolid, figure to take over at the White House. Unfortunately for him, he has been caught up in the Clinton campaign fundraising scandal and could suffer the indignity of being investigated by an independent prosecutor.

Mr Gore claims to be a native of Tennessee, but much of his life has been spent in Washington. He entered the Senate himself after college, a stint in Vietnam and a spell on a Tennessee newspaper.

KEY PLAYERS

□ Kenneth Starr is the independent prosecutor who has never actually been a prosecutor but who has pursued Mr Clinton with zeal. He had a strictly religious upbringing in Texas, became a lawyer, was Solicitor-General in the Bush Administration and mentioned for the US Supreme Court.

□ David Kendall is the President's private lawyer. Like Mr Clinton, he was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford and a chum of his at Yale Law School. A Quaker brought up in the Midwest, he always seems to be angry with the media during his rare public pronouncements.

□ Henry Hyde, with his shock of white hair, is likely to become a familiar figure as chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, if it follows the Watergate precedent of holding televised hearings into the Lewinsky affair. A senior Republican from Chicago, he is respected on both sides of the aisle.

□ Newt Gingrich is the Republican House Speaker and ultimate referee if there are any procedural rows while the House considers impeachment. He was leader of the Republican revolution that won control of the House four years ago and was mentioned as presidential material, but he botched his chances with assorted mis-steps.

□ Richard Gephardt is the leader of the House Democratic minority. A liberal from the unionised precincts of St Louis, he is viewed with deep distrust by the Clinton crowd. They suspect presidential ambitions to undercut Al Gore's chances in 2000.

WHAT THEY SAID

"His answer was that 'No, there were no surprises'."

Tom Daschle, leader of the Senate Democrats, on Mr Clinton's reply when asked if there were any new and damaging revelations yet to surface

"I think he is telling the American people that he has made a very, very bad mistake, that he assumes responsibility for it, that he wants to take steps to move forward"

Janet Reno, Attorney-General

"The report contains substantial and credible information that may constitute grounds for impeachment of the President"

Spokesman for independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr

"There is no basis for impeachment"

David Kendall, President Clinton's lawyer

"No one looks forward to this traumatic journey that we're about to enter on. Any impeachment cannot succeed unless it is done in a bipartisan or non-partisan way... We can only produce the facts in an orderly fashion and give the members an opportunity to vote. This is an exercise in individual conscience, and we ask for God's help and blessing"

Henry Hyde, Republican chairman of the House Judiciary Committee

"There's a great desire for fairness"

Richard Gephardt, House Democratic leader

"We seem to be living history over again. Time seems to be turning backward in its fight and many of the mistakes that President Nixon made are being made all over again"

Senator Robert Byrd, the former Democrat leader in the Senate

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Hillary Clinton does not plan to forgive publicly her husband's worst infidelity, writes **Bronwen Maddox**

First Lady seeks life after White House

THROUGH her husband's moment of crisis, Hillary Clinton is sticking doggedly to business as usual, with an exhausting programme involving worthy causes, which may prove not just a welcome distraction but a shrewd foundation for a political career of her own after the President leaves the White House.

But the First Lady, who has pointedly been absent from the President's side during all his apologies for his affair with Monica Lewinsky, has no plans to tell the nation that she has forgiven him, aides say.

Her only public comment on the trauma of her husband's confession was a terse "I'm doing fine", delivered at a brisk walk during last week's trip to Russia and Ireland. She has made clear through friends that she "believes in her marriage", but also that, out of her husband's long history of infidelity, his seduction of the White House



PRESIDENT IN CRISIS

CAREER

Mrs Clinton will appear at an Irish-American function at the White House together with her husband, and will introduce him. Officials expect the reception to be a relaxed event, as upbeat as conceivable in the circumstances, as many of the guests are old friends, and as it follows on the heels of the President's rapturous welcome in Ireland.

Last night, she was due to introduce her husband at a Democratic fund-raising event. Aides were not expecting that she would use the occasion to make an explicit appeal for support for the President. Otherwise Mrs Clinton is occupying herself with her own schedule of favourite causes. Yesterday, in the White House East Room, she hosted a function to raise awareness of colon cancer, and to promote partnerships

between the public and private sectors in treating it. Katie Couric, the NBC network's star interviewer, who recently lost her husband to the disease, was among the guests, as was Ellen Levine, editor-in-chief of *Good Housekeeping*.

There is growing speculation that Mrs Clinton will seek a political career of her own after her husband leaves the White House — whether in 2000 at the end of his term, or earlier through abrupt resignation or impeachment.

Her pet projects — with the emphasis on women's issues, health and education — the only political activity for an unelected First Lady which Americans could comfortably contemplate, could yet provide her with a springboard into politics as her husband leaves the stage.



Hillary Clinton stood by the President after the Gennifer Flowers affair, but is now keeping herself busy and has pointedly been absent from his side during all his apologies for his affair with Monica Lewinsky

How many of his men will stand by the President?

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THOSE who stood by Richard Nixon, and conspired with him, became known as all the President's men. Who will stay with Bill Clinton in his time of peril?

Some old-timers have already jumped ship or signalled their intention of doing so. George Stephanopoulos, so close to the President that he sometimes held his coat, did not sign up for a second term as political counsellor and adviser. Instead he opted for more lucrative fields as a television commentator and lecturer at Columbia University. Judging from some of his harsh public advice to Mr Clinton, he is glad to be out of it all.

Mike McCurry, the presidential press secretary, is also departing for greener pastures after four years of jocular banter with White House reporters who still admire his capacity for keeping his patience and dignity intact. They wonder how much he knew of the Monica Lewinsky affair when he was stonewalling about it. Certainly he had his suspicions, as he let slip one day early on when he admitted that, if there were a simple explanation for the Clinton-Lewinsky relationship, he would already have given it.

It is not unusual for administration officials to slip away in the closing years of a second term. By keeping to this tradition, Mr McCurry can expect to cash in on his high profile among the many Washington firms of lobbyists looking for people with clout. He will be replaced in the hot seat by his deputy, Joe Lockhart, who has admitted: "Most of my friends think I'm absolutely out of my mind."

Perhaps the most loyal of the Clinton loyalists is Bruce Lindsey, an astute, low-profile lawyer who has been with the President since the early days

OLD ALLIES DEPART

in Arkansas. Known as the ultimate fixer, he has denied allegations that he was sent out to persuade women not to speak of their sexual relations with Mr Clinton.

Mr Lindsey came to the attention of Kenneth Starr during the Whitewater phase of his investigation. Mr Lindsey denied any illegality, but there is speculation in Washington that he could fall foul of Mr Starr again in the Lewinsky case.

Paul Begala will probably be with Mr Clinton, in a phrase used by the President, "until the last dog dies". Officially a White House counsellor, Mr Begala was on hand to adjust the President's lapel microphone as he prepared to make his inadequate mea culpa speech last month.

Mr Begala insisted for seven months that President Clinton had told the truth when he denied sexual relations with Ms Lewinsky. Now, for all the egg on his face, Mr Begala is staying on.

So is Rahm Emanuel, senior adviser to the President and another who publicly denied that there was any linguistic evasiveness in Mr Clinton denying he had "sexual relations" with Ms Lewinsky, only to discover that it excluded oral sex in Mr Clinton's view.

One official who has expressed an interest in leaving is Erskine Bowles, the courtly Southern banker who is White House Chief of Staff. For now, though, he is apparently staying, though one cannot imagine him wanting to emulate Alexander Haig, the final Chief of Staff during Watergate, who assumed many reins of power as Nixon fell apart.

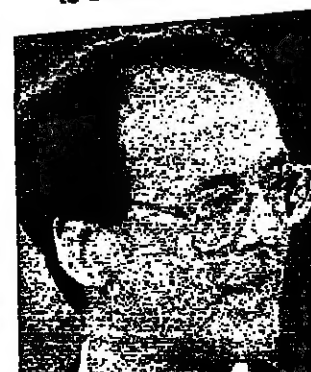
Most of my friends think I'm absolutely out of my mind?



Stephanopoulos: glad to be out of the fray



McCurry: departing with dignity intact



Bowles: has expressed an interest in leaving



Lindsey: most loyal of Clinton benchmen

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Ministers scrap EU scheme giving free beef to the poor

By JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

AScheme that gave the poor and homeless free supplies of meat from the European Union beef mountain has been axed by the Government.

Thousands of the most needy have eaten the cans of rich steak stew since the EU Food Surplus Scheme was set up in 1987. But after complaints from some char-

ities that the scheme was bureaucratic and costly to operate, the Government has decided to end the handout from next year.

The Tories protested that the poor would lose out and suggested that the scheme was being abolished because of the budget cuts that the Treasury has demanded at the Ministry of Agriculture.

The scheme, dubbed the Food for the Needy scheme, was designed as a way of helping the poor while

reducing the EU beef mountain. This is created when Brussels intervenes in the market and buys beef to keep prices high.

Each member state is allowed a certain amount of beef to give to those people who otherwise could not afford the meat. This prevents the beef market being distorted.

Anyone who is homeless or destitute, or receiving income support, family credit, disability working allowance, jobseeker's

allowance, or living in a welfare hostel is eligible to have between 12 and 24 free cans a year.

Although the take-up differs each year depending on how much beef is available, an average of 60,000 people benefit from the free food, which is worth some £10 million each year. This year ten million cans are expected to be distributed (about 3,000 tonnes of beef).

The Government pays for the beef to be processed and canned. It

is then distributed by charities and local community groups.

Jeff Rooker, the Junior Agriculture Minister, announced the end of the scheme in a little-noticed part of July's Comprehensive Spending Review. "We have been disappointed in the uptake of this scheme and we know that charitable organisations distributing beef have found the rules overly bureaucratic," he said.

Tim Yeo, the Shadow Minister

for Agriculture, said he was appalled to hear that Britain would be the first member state to scrap the scheme. He suspected that it had been scrapped as a result of cost-cutting demanded by the Treasury and wrote yesterday to Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, demanding its reinstatement.

Robin Brooks, sales and marketing director for HL Foods, which processes and cans about a fifth of all the beef in the scheme, said: "I

am absolutely amazed. They say it is being scrapped because there is no demand but that is rubbish. Without the scheme some [processing] firms might close."

But the Salvation Army, one of the biggest charities to distribute the beef, said it did not object. A spokesman said the scheme had been expensive and inefficient to run because charities had to pay for its administration, transport and storage costs.

Pro-hunting alliance spreads its rural roots

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

THE Countryside Alliance, which brought 250,000 people on to the streets of London last March to defend hunting, relaunched itself yesterday with a new mission to champion the rural way of life.

The defence of country sports will still be a central concern of the alliance, but equal emphasis will be given to building links with other countryside groups and to winning support and sympathy among urban voters.

Peter Voute, the alliance's executive director, said that a roadshow would visit 20 venues this month, starting this Sunday at the Hampshire Country Sports Day at Alresford.

A new eight-point manifesto was adopted unanimously at a meeting this week of delegates from its 14 regional branches. Among its aims are to "preserve the freedoms of country people and their way of life", to "lead campaigns for country sports, their related trades and activities, and the countryside", and to "co-operate closely with other organisations to promote and protect the rural way of life".

The relaunch comes after several months of turmoil which culminated at the end of July in the departure of the alliance's recently appointed chief executive, Edward Duke.

Army patrols in Belfast to end

Government starts demilitarisation to encourage the IRA to hand in its arms, reports Martin Fletcher

THE Government is planning swift and extensive demilitarisation in Northern Ireland to encourage the IRA disarmament that must start soon if the peace process is to succeed.

As David Trimble and Gerry Adams yesterday heralded a new era of co-operation with the first face-to-face meeting between Unionist and republican leaders since 1922, the Royal Ulster Constabulary announced that all army patrols in Belfast are to cease from this weekend.

With the security threat now greatly reduced, sources said other steps included base closures across the Province and the deployment of troops away from those nationalist areas where they are no longer necessary. The actual withdrawal of several hundred of the nearly 18,000 troops in Northern Ireland is also understood to be imminent.

Dublin, Washington or London accepts Sinn Féin equating IRA-held weapons with British Army-held weapons," said another. "At the same time a reduction in tensions makes it easier for all sides to reduce the amount of armaments they claim are necessary for self-defence."

Mr Trimble's historic meeting with Mr Adams at Stormont was unthinkable until very recently, and heralded the end of the long Cold War between Unionism and republicanism. Mr Trimble still declined to shake the Sinn Féin president's hand, but called the encounter "civilised and workmanlike" and said he was "encouraged to hope that things will happen". Mr Adams called the meeting "businesslike, positive and cordial". He praised Northern Ireland's new First Minister as "a man I can do business with" and "the only person in the Ulster Unionist Party who could have brought that party as far as he's brought it".

Mr Adams said he raised the issue of disarmament himself during the 45-minute meeting. He had emphasised Sinn Féin's "genuine and positive and serious commitment" to implementing the Good Friday peace accord in its entirety, and understood Mr



Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin president, and Richard McAuley, his party colleague, leaving Stormont yesterday

Trimble's difficulties with hardline Unionists, but insisted he "could not deliver IRA decommissioning" unless the causes of conflict were removed. He told Mr Trimble "we had to find ways for me to help him and for him to help me". Mr Trimble spoke of a

"chicken and egg problem we have to solve". He said he was satisfied that Mr Adams recognised the need for progress on disarmament, emphasised that nobody was being asked to "surrender or in any way feel humiliated", and hinted that

he had a solution in mind when he said a press conference was not the best place to discuss such a thing.

Both men's accounts of the meeting were remarkable for the absence of the enmity that had previously characterised their relations. Mr Adams

described Mr Trimble as "a man I can do business with, a man I have to do business with and a man I will do business with because this is much more important than the personalities involved... This is about our children and our future".

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ex-spy wins new chance of legal aid

Lawyers for the former MI5 spy David Shayler yesterday won leave to challenge a refusal of legal aid for his battle to avoid being extradited from France. Mr Shayler, 32, was arrested in Paris last month at Britain's request after he claimed to have evidence of malpractice within MI5. He faces charges under the Official Secrets Act.

The deputy chief clerk at Bow Street Magistrates' Court refused an application for legal aid in a hearing last month but in the High Court Mr Shayler's counsel, Leon Daniel, argued that the clerk made a "misdirection in law".

GP practice plea

Hospital-based training methods for GPs, implemented in the 1970s, are putting off potential recruits, according to a study today in the *British Medical Journal*. With about 1,000 posts empty, the study says trainees would feel less daunted if they spent at least three years in a practice.

Heads' pay call

Head teachers demanded a 17 per cent pay rise yesterday, saying that current salary levels were responsible for a shortage of headship candidates, especially in primary schools. The Department for Education and Employment promised action to stimulate recruitment.

M & S peer dies

Lord Marks of Broughton, grandson of the founder of Marks & Spencer, has died aged 78, the family's solicitor said. The peer, thought to have owned a £30 million stake in the store chain, leaves a widow, Marina, and three children by his first wife. He had been married five times.

Skydiver's baby

Penny Roberts, the paralysed skydiver, has given birth to a 6lb boy. Airedale General Hospital in West Yorkshire said the mother and Peter, born three weeks prematurely, were "fine". A week ago Bradford Council dropped its threat to take the child away from Miss Roberts, 35.

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Branson teams up with balloon rival

By CLAUDIA JOSEPH

RICHARD Branson teamed up yesterday with Steve Fossett, his former rival, to pursue their shared dream of becoming the first people to fly around the world in a balloon.

The businessman, whose last attempt was scuppered when his balloon took off without him, invited the American adventurer to join him after his vessel ruptured last month during a thunderstorm. They are planning to fly to Morocco in November.

with Per Lindstrand, the Swedish balloon manufacturer and Branson's co-pilot, for their fourth attempt.

Mr Branson, 48, said: "Until this summer our main rival and I don't mind saying, a major thorn in our side, was Steve Fossett. This friendly rivalry has not only been during our global attempts but over the last decade and beyond."

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SOMETIMES
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DON'T LIKE.

PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD DYKES



If you tell your
girlfriend,
will she think
less of you?

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You may be lucky enough to be able to talk to someone in your family. Then again, you may be one of the large number of people who find talking to your nearest and dearest agonisingly embarrassing.

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Impotence drug available next week at £4.84 a pill, writes Ian Murray

"We have a Government that goes on at great length about the need for horizon scanning, and yet Viagra has been on the horizon now for two years," said Derek Machin, one of the 400 specialist urologists in Britain who are

Mr Machin gave warning

"We just cannot know at this stage what the demand will be and we urgently need the

"In addition some of the men might prefer to use injections or vacuum pumps. We do not expect that those who do take Viagra will want more than four pills a month."

BY PAUL WILKINSON

The demonstrators had started gathering in the city centre several hours before his court appearance. Many carried placards and wore T-shirts bearing the words "I am a friend of Dr Moor". A six-piece jazz band also played.



David Moor, who is accused of murdering a patient, arriving at court

She said: "We want Dr Moor to know that everyone is behind him all the way."

"We didn't want any sad faces at the march because we wanted Dr Moor to be uplifted by what he saw. It was an upbeat atmosphere but at the same time we have to balance that with the fact this is a very serious matter."

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5.10.1998

Pupil drowned unnoticed in survival class

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

A SIXTHFORMER drowned unnoticed under a liferaft at a public school, while pupils above him continued with a sea-survival exercise supervised by Royal Navy specialists.

One exercise was on how to recover a body, an inquest was told yesterday. Nicholas Stafford, 18, lay trapped for up to 15 minutes, and no one noticed anything was wrong until his foot was seen protruding from under the raft in the swimming pool at Charterhouse School.

It is believed that he had become trapped while righting the 25-man liferaft after it had overturned. In a statement issued before the inquest, the student's parents, Colin and Evelyn Stafford, and sisters Rosemary and Elizabeth, from Epsom, Surrey, criticised safety standards at the school in

Godalming, Surrey, which charges fees of more than £13,000 a year. They said they wanted to ensure that survival drills and similar adventure exercises were made safer. The inquest at Guildford was told that the exercise on January 26 was under the supervision of a drill instructor, Petty Officer Russell Witcher, and Leading Airman Kevin Cousins, attached to HMS Sultan. Nikos Georgiakis, a schoolmaster and Officer in Command of the school's Navy Cadets, was overseeing the exercise which he said encouraged team work and leadership. The cadets aged 14 to 18 were wearing trunks and rugby shirts under a survival suits and lifejackets. They had to jump into the pool and swim two lengths before Nicholas and another cadet were selected to right the raft.

Airman Cousins said that when Petty Officer Witcher asked him whether the water was "clear" once the raft had been righted, he called the all clear but had not gone underwater to check. The body lay undiscovered while the group carried on with further exercises, including how to recover a body from the water. Up to 15 minutes later, Airman Cousins spotted the pupil face-up under the raft with his head wedged against the canvas. He was taken to the Royal Surrey County Hospital but died four days later without regaining consciousness. A 15-year-old, who had

helped the sixthformer to right the craft, said: "We were having trouble getting it to turn over. As it came over I was under it. I got a breath of air from an air pocket and struggled to get out. I panicked a bit." The boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, added: "I assumed Nick got out the other way."

Chief Petty Officer Kieran Eagles, of the RN Survival Equipment Group, said that a person could have got under the raft after the post-righting check had been made.

The athletic sixth-former was expecting top A-level grades in geography, biology and chemistry, had been promised a place at Bristol University. His father said that he was a very strong swimmer and was acknowledged as one of the fittest boys in the school. The inquest continues today.



Stafford: family concern on safety

Police hunt for gunman after triple shooting

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

ARMED police were last night hunting a wealthy car dealer who was on the run after a triple shooting that left one man dead and two other people seriously wounded.

Detectives are looking for John Piccolo, 51, whose former lover was injured and her new partner shot dead. Piccolo's son was later found sixty miles away with head wounds.

Martin Cass, a 23-year-old businessman, and Jane Smith, 26, were ambushed outside their home in the Essex village of Ford End, near Chelmsford, after they drove home from shopping on Wednesday evening.

Mr Cass was shot in the head at close range with a 12-bore double-barrelled shotgun and died in the driveway of the couple's end-terrace cottage. Ms Smith fled to the house next door but, police said, was pursued and shot in the chest and shoulder in her neighbour's sitting room. A shotgun was abandoned at the scene and the killer fled in a Volvo car with the lights out.

Her two daughters, aged 9 and 12, were in the rear seats of the car parked outside.

Sixty miles away and five hours later police discovered Darren Piccolo, 26, who is believed to have been shot first, hours earlier at his father's home on the 90-acre Freedom Farm in the Suffolk village of Dallington near

Woodbridge. Detectives, alerted by colleagues in Essex, were watching from a distance, hoping to arrest Mr Piccolo if he returned, when they saw a car pull up at the house and pull away again moments later with Darren Piccolo inside. Neighbours of Mr Cass said Mr Piccolo had been stalking Ms Smith and in May police set up a road block in Ford End when he appeared to have broken a court injunction to stay a mile from the house the woman shared with Mr Cass.

Both Ms Smith and Darren Piccolo were under guard in separate hospitals yesterday as armed police searched for the missing man, supported by a helicopter. Darren Piccolo was said to be in a critical condition. Ms Smith was said to be in a comfortable condition.

Detective Superintendent Brian Storey, who is leading the investigation, said: "In my opinion this was a domestic entanglement and there is no other motive. My message to Mr Piccolo is to give himself up. I will meet him anywhere he wishes."

Police are waiting to interview the two girls. Detective Superintendent Storey said: "They presumably would have seen everything up to the point where their mother and the gunman went into the neighbour's house."

Not touching a drop can be bad for you

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

TEETOTALERS are about twice as likely to suffer from ill health and psychological problems as moderate drinkers, according to a study published in *The Lancet* today. Even heavy drinkers are generally fitter and less prone to limiting illness.

The research, among 9,605 people born in Britain during March 1958, is one of the first to try to relate the effects of drinking on younger people. Earlier studies have tended to concentrate on people in middle age or later and there is little information about the lifetime characteristics of abstainers.

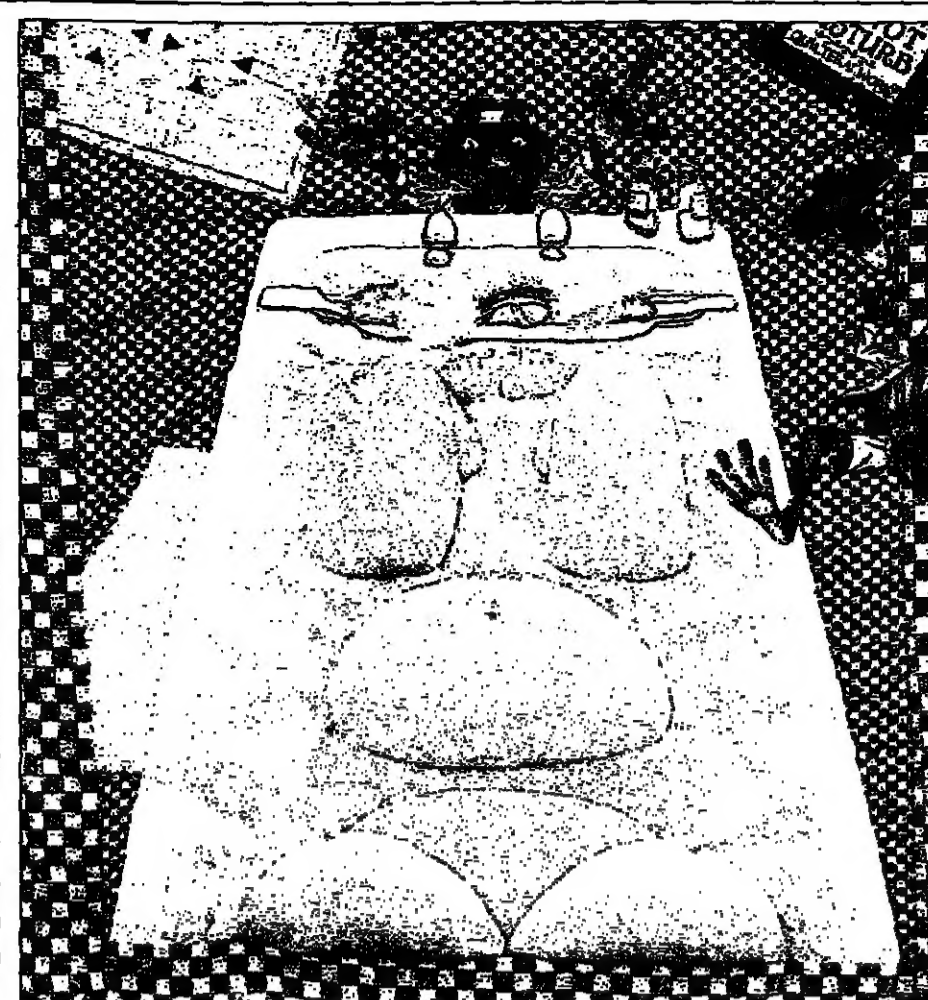
Women who consumed between three and ten pints of beer (or the equivalent) a week and men who drank between ten and 17½ pints a week were classified as "moderate drinkers" — although those levels go above the 14 units (seven pints) for women and 21 units

for men that are the medically recommended limits.

The researchers, from the Institute of Child Health in London and the Australian National University in Canberra, found that even "light drinkers" — women who drank no more than five units and men no more than ten units a week — were no healthier than the moderate group.

Checks were made to ensure that the poorer health of teetotalers was not due to past heavy drinkers giving up alcohol, nor that abstainers did not drink because of ill health in the first place.

The researchers suggested that abstainers and heavy drinkers may share common risk factors such as unemployment and financial hardship. Moderate drinking, in contrast, may have a protective effect on health.



A self-portrait bedspread by Gillian Banks won first prize at a quilting conference



Inspiration came to Mrs Banks in her bathroom

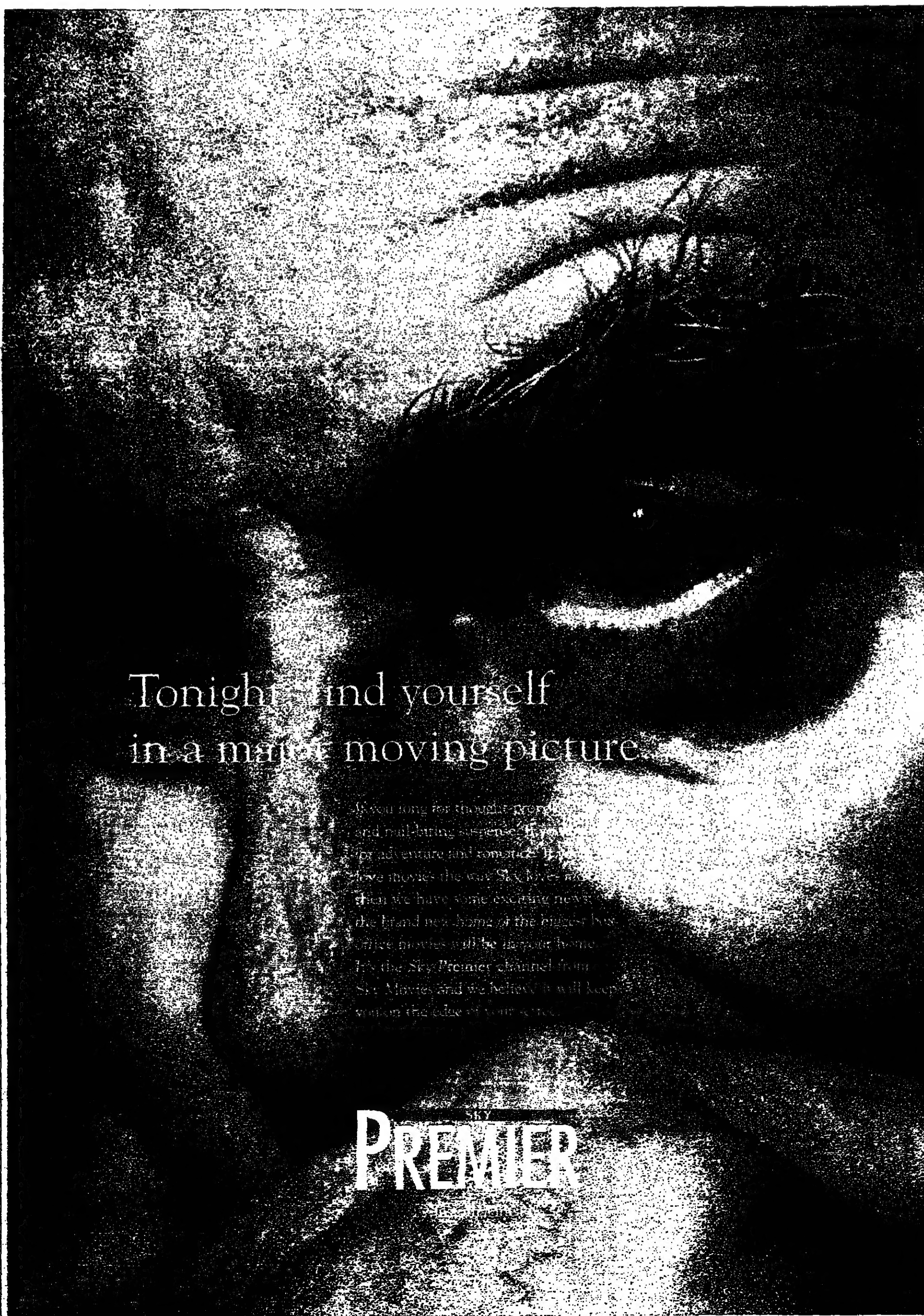
Bathtime view has quilters in stitches

EYEBROWS were raised among the ladies who stitch and snip in the annual competition of the Quilter's Guild of the British Isles (Paul Wilkinson writes). Displayed among the 33 intricately patterned bedspreads was a self-portrait of a 50-year-old mother of three, naked in the bath.

But along with the eyebrows, Gillian Banks, from Durham, lifted the coveted Sue Ridgwell Bowl, awarded for the most popular piece of work at the conference. Pat Nichols, president of the guild, said: "It shows we are not all sitting in our rocking

chairs making traditional patterns by the fireside. Quilters have a fantastic sense of humour and 99 per cent of people at the meeting were in fits of laughter over this one." Suzy Barton, of *The Quilter* magazine, said: "I think it struck a chord because a lot of us are rather plump."

Mrs Banks, who teaches quilting professionally, said: "The theme at the meeting was *Aspects of Water* and it was being held in Bath. I was lying in my own bath, thinking of ideas, when this one came into my head. I knew it would cause a laugh."



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Takeover talk fuels Arsenal share boom

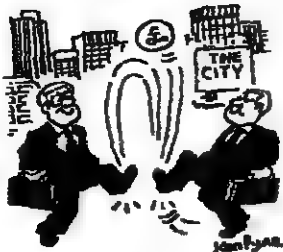
BY JASON NISSE
AND RAYMOND SNODDY

ARSENAL shares soared £1.200 to £4.100 yesterday after the news that the North London club was in talks with Carlton Communications that could lead to a £250 million deal.

Trading in the shares, on the unregulated Oxfex market, put a value of nearly £230 million on the club, which won the Premiership and FA Cup double last season. Carlton confirmed that the negotiations were at an early stage but might lead to a full-blown bid.

Earlier this week, when Carlton was playing down talk of a bid, Arsenal shares changed hands at £2,000. Two years ago they could be bought for £700.

The Carlton move led to a flurry of rumours about the burgeoning football sector. Pearson, the media group that owns the *Financial Times*, denied it was about to buy a club, while Granada, the makers of *Coronation Street*, was lending off suggestions it might bid for Liverpool, the third English club to have been invited, with Arsenal and



Manchester United, to join the European Super League. Aston Villa, which nearly struck a deal with Mirror Group Newspapers two years ago, said that it had been in talks with media companies but these might fall short of an offer. There were strong rumours that Leeds Sporting, which owns Leeds United, might be about to strike a deal with Canal Plus, the French broadcaster that owns Paris St Germain.

Carlton's deal with Arsenal might still be some way from completion. The group, which owns Carlton TV in London and Central in the Midlands, wants to use Arsenal to secure rights for televising live games on its new digital television

Manchester United launched the world's first daily football club channel last night (Carol Midgley writes). MUTV will be broadcast on Sky, initially only on its new digital service, from 6pm to midnight, seven days a week, for a monthly subscription of £4.99. Programmes will include cookery, aerobics and football tips for younger fans.

joint venture, ONDigital. The two are also looking at creating an Arsenal club television channel along the lines of the MUTV channel, launched last night, and the purchase of the rights of Arsenal's overseas games.

Michael Green, the founder of Carlton, has been a friend of David Dein, the deputy chairman of Arsenal, for more than 25 years. Mr Dein and Danny Fiszman, a fellow director, control 44 per cent of Arsenal shares, having bought into the club for only £250,000 in 1982. The Carr family, the former owner of the *News of the World*, owns 26 per cent.

Mr Dein has had talks with outside parties, including Ladbroke, the gaming and

hotels group, about selling some of his shares in Arsenal. Two years ago he sold 3,000 shares to Fiszman for £4.35 million after holding talks with outside parties.

Carlton may stop short of making an offer for the company if it can buy a stake and take a seat on the board. But if it buys the entire Dein-Fiszman holding, City takeover rules mean it will have to make a bid for the whole company.

Mr Green's father was an Arsenal supporter, his brother David is a season ticket holder and the Carlton chairman has attended Arsenal games in the past.

Carlton, in a joint venture with the Mirror Group, was an unsuccessful bidder for the Premier League rights last time round. They were outbid by BSkyB, a venture in which News International, owner of *The Times*, has a 40 per cent stake.

The contract runs out in 2001, when Mr Green's digital terrestrial television company — a joint venture with Granada — should be starting to make an impact.

Carlton bid, page 52



The Tottenham Hotspur striker Les Ferdinand signs autographs for young fans outside the planned FA Premier League Hall of Fame, after being chosen as one of the first six players to be featured there (John Goodbody reports).

Newcastle United's Alan Shearer was the only other Briton; others were Eric Cantona of France, Peter Schmeichel of Denmark, Gianfranco Zola of Italy and Dennis Bergkamp of Holland. A 19-man panel chaired by Sir Geoff Hurst

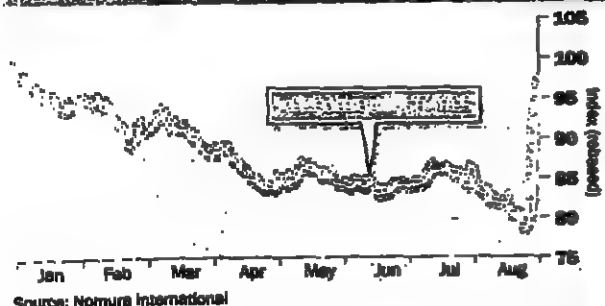
selected one player for each season since the Premiership started in 1992. Ferdinand, chosen for 1995-96, when he played for Newcastle, said: "It is a really great feeling." The hall is to open in March at London's former County Hall.

SHARE OF THE ACTION

	Market capitalisation (£000's)	Share price start of season (p)	Current price (p)	% change	Current league position
Aston Villa	69,273	525	605	15	2
Charlton Athletic	12,339	53	61	15	10
Chelsea	132,668	75	85	13	18
Leeds	54,131	12.5	19	52	3
Leicester City	11,580	54	39	-28	15
Manchester United	550,352	158	212	35	8
Newcastle United	97,403	70	88	26	19
Nottingham Forest	16,724	40	37	-8	7
Southampton	13,066	82	48	-42	20
Tottenham Hotspur	65,455	50	65	30	9
Arsenal*	229,600	£2400	£4100	67	5
Everton*	88,500	£1900	£1900	0	16
Liverpool*	145,085	£4000	£4500	13	1
West Ham United*	66,000	£300	£300	0	11
Birmingham City	15,500	30	28	-7	1
Bolton	20,510	19	17	-11	8
QPR	4,553	24	12	-50	23
Sheffield United	10,000	20	20	0	8
Sunderland	40,760	445	500	12	2
West Bromwich	8,090	9000	11000	22	7
Middlesbrough	8,843	0.625	0.75	20	13
Preston Nth End	7,636	390	380	-3	2
Sheff Wed	0	1.565	1.565	0	2
Cardiff	98,780	£220	£2100	-5	2
Heart of Midlothian	9,412	95	98	3	4

*Traded only on matched bargain basis

NOMURA FOOTIE INDEX



Analysts predict good season for media marriages

BY NICHOLAS WOOD AND DANIEL MCGRODY

EVERY football club in the English Premiership will have a media partner within five years, City analysts predicted yesterday as shares in top sides soared.

The sudden flurry of interest has been triggered by BSkyB's £623 million agreed bid for Manchester United. As the price of football stock jumped 10 to 15 per cent and millions of shares changed hands, analysts said that buyers would initially focus on the big clubs. But with expanding cable services and this year's digital more television channels, even smaller clubs were likely to become targets for firms wanting to broadcast their games to local fans.

David Brooks, leisure analyst at Nomura International, said: "It is almost inevitable that, in five years' time, practically every football club in the Premiership will be aligned with a media partner."

Nick Batram, a football analyst at Greig Middleton, said: "No one wants to be left behind. Football and television was always going to be a match made in heaven and the only surprise is that it took so long. The first deal was the perfect couple: the most successful glamour club and the richest TV network."

"There will be a few rushed, shotgun marriages next with partners not so attractive, but television does not want to miss out and the clubs are looking to link up with the richest suitors."

"The future is pay per view and European leagues. None

of the top clubs can accommodate everyone who wants to see them in stadiums that are too small, so the only option is televised games. The technology is nearly here, so the media deals have started in earnest."

The key to those links is a court ruling over television rights. BSkyB's £670 million four-year deal with the Premier League expires in 2001, and the price for renewing the rights could be as high as £1 billion.

The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) wants to ban collective bargaining by the Premier League. It backs the ambition of major clubs to negotiate individual contracts with media groups and a decision on that will be made by the Restrictive Practices Court in January.

If the court backs the OFT, broadcasters could face a scramble for television rights to leading clubs. If regulations are relaxed, then big players such as Carlton and BSkyB in could have interests in more than one club. The present league rules prevent anyone owning more than one team.

The surge in interest in football shares this week follows a 25 per cent drop in their value since January. Analysts said many of the initial flotations had been overpriced. Mr Brooks cited Aston Villa and Leicester as potential "best buys", because of their good commercial management, playing strength, on-field performance and property assets. But he said he regarded Newcastle United as a "sell".



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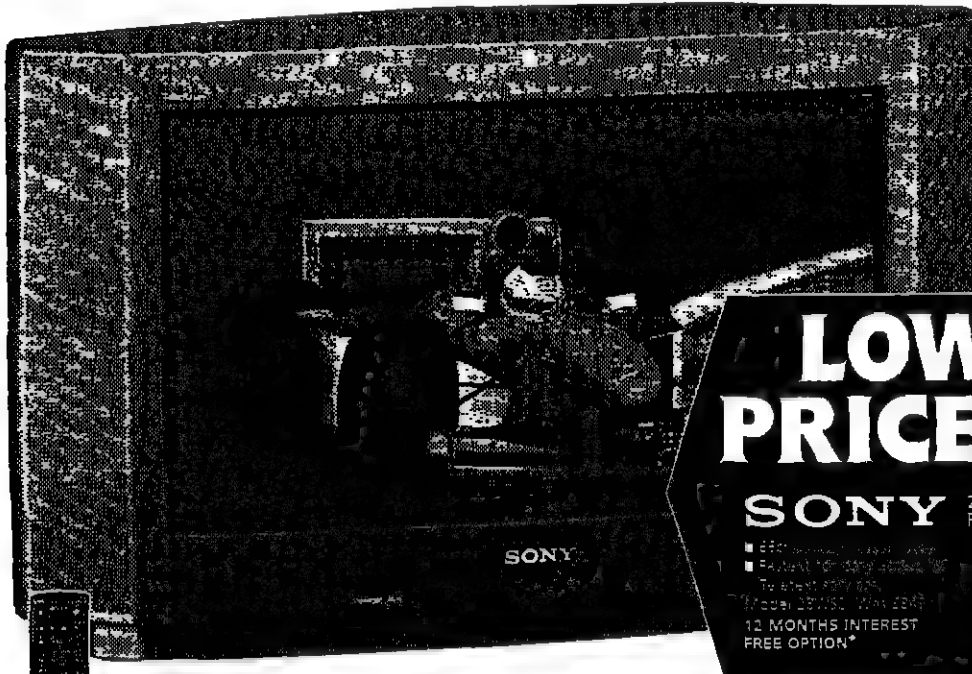
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THE TIMES FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1998

Petty criminals could go to jail at the weekend

MINOR offenders could be allowed to keep their jobs and serve their sentences at weekends, according to a study by MPs on ways to relieve pressure on Britain's jails.

The report from the Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs, released yesterday, says that rises in the prison population are "unsustainable" and up to a quarter of the 65,000 prisoners could have been given alternative sentences.

Weekend jail could be used for offenders convicted of petty crime or serious drink-driving offences. During the week they could work, train or look for jobs, but the candidates would have to come from stable backgrounds, it said. Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and Canada have schemes that allow some prisoners to go to work during the day and spend their nights and weekends in jail.

The idea was put to the committee in evidence by Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Inspector of Prisons. He argued that jails had spare capacity at weekends because prisoners went on home leave. The proposal was supported by Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, but the Home Office said the plan would not relieve pressure.

Chris Mullin, the committee chairman, said yesterday that there were practical difficulties and weekend prison had a limited application. The report recognised that the prison

Stewart Tendler reports on a study by MPs that examines ways to relieve overcrowding

population had risen by more than half in five years and could reach 82,000 in the next seven years, he said. It emphasised the need for credible alternatives, which must work and be seen to work by the public.

There are offenders for whom prison is the only appropriate penalty, but there are many people currently sentenced to imprisonment who could be dealt with more effectively and at far less expense by a non-custodial sentence, Mr Mullin said.

The bill for an average prison sentence was £24,271, compared with £1,770 to £3,500 for a community service order. In a report endorsed unanimously, the committee quoted estimates by Sir David showing that 70 per cent of women, up to 40 per cent of youths and up to 30 per cent of men should not be in prison.

The MPs said they found it

astonishing that there had been no rigorous research on the effectiveness of community sentences. Sentencing was still "guesswork and optimism". Too few judges and magistrates inspected community sentencing schemes.

The report called for tougher penalties for offenders who breached orders. Police can take weeks to bring offenders back to court and the committee recommended a new offence, which could lead to a prison sentence.

The MPs also recommend that the term "community service order" should be changed to "criminal work order" to make it sound more like punishment.

Paul Cavadino, of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, said the report showed a sea change in the political consensus. It was the death knell of Michael Howard's policy of "Prison works", he said.



Gary Glitter arriving at the court in Yate, near Bristol

Gary Glitter in court on child sex charges

GARY GLITTER appeared in court yesterday to face child sex and pornography charges. The pop star was arrested nine months ago when indecent images were allegedly found stored on his computer by repair workers.

Glitter, 54, confirmed his age and address and his real name as Paul Francis Gadd. He looked straight ahead while the 110 charges against him were read out at North Avon Magistrates' Court. Asked if he understood the charges, he replied: "I do."

The singer faces five allegations of indecent assault on girls aged under 16. The charges, which date from 1975, relate to two girls. He is also alleged to have committed four serious sexual offences with one of the girls, of which three are said to have happened when she was under 16.

He faces 51 charges under the Protection of Children Act 1978 of making indecent pseudo-photographs of children, and 50 alternative charges under the Criminal Justice Act 1988 of possessing indecent photographs of children. The hearing was adjourned.

TOMORROW IN THE SATURDAY TIMES Iris: a memoir

Alzheimer sufferers are not always gentle



She does not know she has written 27 remarkable novels, as well as her books on philosophy, to become a Dame of the British Empire

JOHN BAYLEY'S MOVING STORY OF HIS LIFE WITH IRIS MURDOCH

Satellite TV porn channel banned

By CAROL MIDDLEY MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A FRENCH-BASED television channel was banned yesterday from transmitting hard-core pornography to Britain via satellite.

Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, ordered the ban, effective from today, after a High Court judge refused to continue a legal order preventing him from outlawing Eurotica Rendez-Vous until after its operators have had a chance to challenge the legality of the action.

The Government used a clause of an EU directive that allows member states to act against programmes "which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors". But it could face a damages claim if the courts eventually find it has acted unlawfully.

Yesterday Mr Justice Scott Baker, gave Danish Satellite Television A/S, which owns the channel, and its Luxembourg-based agents, Rendez-Vous Television International SA, permission to seek judicial review. The companies want a ruling that Mr Smith acted unlawfully and outside his jurisdiction when he issued a prohibition order on July 30 this year under the 1990 Broadcasting Act.

In October last year the Independent Television Commission decided that Eurotica Rendez-Vous, available via a decoder, was "unsuitable" and recommended that Mr Smith seek the order, which prohibits the marketing and sale of the service.

Mr Smith, who is taking a gamble on the outcome of the court challenge, said yesterday: "We are determined to protect children from satellite pornography and my message to pornographers is clear. We will not tolerate material such as this and the Government will not hesitate to take this action in future."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man held after death of family

The boyfriend of a woman who was found dead with her two children at her home in Egeston, near Bolton, was being questioned by detectives last night. Police had named Peter Hall, 34, of Radcliffe, near Manchester, as the man they wanted to speak to in connection with the deaths of Celeste Bates and her sons Daniel, eight, and Milo, 16 months.

Mr Hall was arrested after he crashed his car in Bolton. He suffered minor injuries.

Boyfriend jailed

The boyfriend of Debbie Linden, 36, an actress and former Page Three girl, was cleared at the Old Bailey of giving her a heroin overdose. Russell Ainsworth, 27, from Kingston, Surrey, was found not guilty of manslaughter, but was jailed for 30 months for supplying the drug.

Night flights stay

Residents have lost a fight to restrict night flying at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports next summer. Night movements and noise quotas would stay the same as for this summer, the Government said. Anti-noise groups are still hoping for a night curfew in 2000.

CORRECTION

It is North Nottinghamshire Health Authority that plans to block all new references for male impotence, not Northamptonshire, as stated in a leading article on the drug Viagra (September 9).

A photograph (August 8), linked to a report on toxic waste dumps, showed a Harpurle refuse vehicle on a refuse site. Harpurle asks us to make clear that its business is to hire its vehicles to local authorities, and the company has no connection whatsoever with toxic waste dumps or their contents.

Spectacular birdie makes golfer's day

BIRDIES and eagles are every golfer's dream, but one player's winning shot will go down in sporting legend as a crow (Joanna Bale writes).

During an early-morning game with two friends, Mike Wisgard's ball was just short of the 10th green when a large crow descended and nudged the ball with its beak 30ft along the green into the hole. The advertising agency executive, 46, from Richmond, Surrey, said: "I watched in amazement as it started nudging the ball. When the ball rolled, next the hole, the bird

turned round and plopped it in from the other side. There are quite a few crows around the course, but this one had obviously been studying the game and just fancied a go."

The bird saved Mr Wisgard's par and he then won the par-four hole at Queen's Park golf club in Bournemouth. His playing partners were left baffled. Phil Aylliff, 69, of New Milton, Hampshire, said: "There is nothing in the rulebook about this. Only four shots had been taken by Mike and that had to be the number entered."

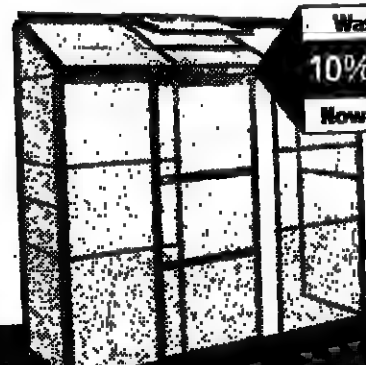
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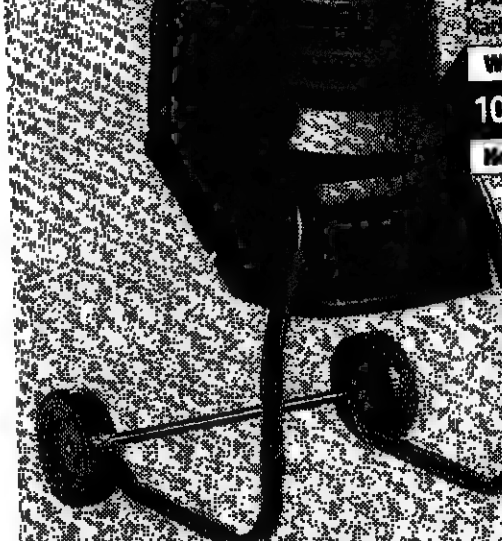
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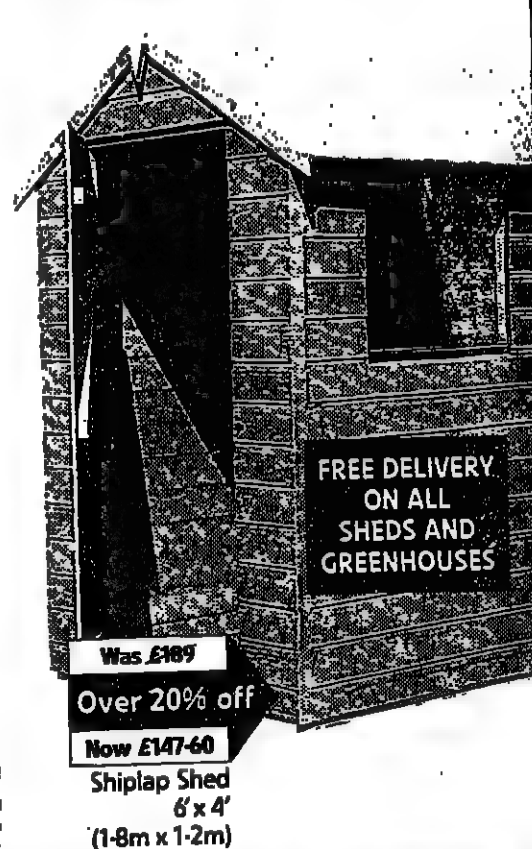
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September 4

September 9

The cat's whiskers: Sprite

from our principles

TA cuts are misguided, say MPs

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Government's plan to cut the size of the Territorial Army by more than a third was condemned by MPs yesterday as shortsighted and misconceived.

The Defence Select Committee urged ministers to reconsider the recommendation of the recent Strategic Defence Review which said that the TA should cut its numbers from 59,000 to 40,000.

In a report on the review, the committee said the document's publication in July marked a "black day" for the TA. "The Territorial Army is still a valuable resource as long-term insurance against the unexpected, and retooling should be considered before cuts," the report said.

It added: "These forces, including the cadets, provide a vital recruiting ground for the regular forces and we believe a reduction in their roles and establishment could prove to be a very false economy in a period when recruiting to the regulars is such a challenge."

John Maples, the Shadow Defence Secretary, said: "With a small professional army of only 120,000 men, as we have at present, there ought to be a general reserve — not only to support the regular army, but to build on in a time of crisis."

Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrat defence

spokesman, who sits on the committee, said: "The Government's proposals are inadequately thought out, and potentially damaging to Britain's defence capability."

Although the committee backed the overall thrust of the review, it warned that the Government had possibly gone too far in boosting the expeditionary nature of the Armed Forces at the expense of neglecting home defence.

The committee also warned that any further cuts to the defence budget beyond the 3 per cent efficiency savings already set could cause the entire strategy to unravel. The MPs added that the Armed Forces would have a capability gap until two aircraft carriers planned in the review were operational — which might not be until 2018. They also questioned the decision to proceed with a £120 million refit of the nuclear submarine HMS *Spartan*, four years before it was scheduled to be scrapped.

John Spellar, the Defence Minister, said many of the roles carried out by the TA — such as defending key installations in case of an invasion threat — were no longer a priority. "It is wasteful and demoralising to maintain a large establishment for a non-existent role," he said.

Labour invokes fear of the Left

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR officials were last night playing up the prospect of hard-left activists seizing up to four of the six seats on the party's National Executive Committee in this month's elections.

In what was seen as an attempt to increase the vote for the Blairite candidates, a party spokesman said it was plausible that the hard Left would gain the most seats.

Insiders suggest that Liz Davies, the hard-left activist vetoed as a candidate at the last general election, and Mark Seddon, Editor of the left-wing newspaper *Tribune*, are likely to win places on the reformed constituency section of the NEC. The party's rejection of Ms Davies as a potential MP caused a rift and her election now to the NEC would prove embarrassing for the leadership.

A senior party spokesman said: "I wouldn't be surprised if the hard-left slate were to win a number of seats — more than last year. I don't think anybody is expecting a clean sweep for a Blairite slate."

The Grassroots Alliance, fielding six hard-left candidates, suggested that the leadership was trying to play up the Left's prospects to persuade members who are not activists to vote. Members First, fielding six moderates, believes that a bigger vote will boost its chances.



Alan Howarth, left, the Heritage Minister, and Sir Martin Jacoby, chairman of the Prudential Corporation, at the Prudential building in Central London, one of 2,200 buildings open during English Heritage's Open Days event this and next weekend

Dewar aims to shake off sleaze with relaunch

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

SNP SILENT

DONALD DEWAR, the Scottish Secretary, will attempt today to draw a line under the legacy of Labour sleaze north of the border by relaunching the party under the banner of Scottish New Labour.

The move comes on the first anniversary of the devolution referendum and two days after the explosion of Tommy Graham, MP for Renfrewshire West, who has come to characterise the bitter feuding in its urban heartlands.

It is understood that the title was chosen after work with focus groups. Mr Dewar will also unveil a mission statement *The Lifetime of Opportunity*, comprising policies offering "opportunity for all from the cradle to the grave", focusing on child care, education, housing and health.

Political analysts expressed doubts about the name change. John Curtis of Strathclyde University said it was "entirely misguided". By emphasising the party's links with Blairism through the word "new" rather than its Scottishness, Labour was unlikely to convince the electorate that it could capitalise on the relative autonomy offered by devolution.

Mr Dewar's announcement in Glasgow is likely to be overshadowed by Mr Graham's plans to challenge his expulsion in the courts through judicial review.

Yesterday Mr Graham, 54, whose 33-year Labour Party

The Scottish National Party unveiled its key policies for next year's elections to the Holyrood parliament yesterday but postponed a decision on whether it would use tax-raising powers.

Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, outlined intentions to reform business rates, introduce proportional representation for local elections and to abolish tuition fees for students from England, Wales and Ireland studying in Scotland. However, the party avoided saying whether it will use the parliament's 3p-in-the-pound tax varying power.

membership ended on Wednesday after he was guilty of sustained misconduct, insisted that he was "Labour through and through" and had no intention of defecting to the Scottish National Party.

The 20-stone, cigar-smoking MP, who claims he was the victim of a conspiracy by Blairite enemies, warned other MPs of the "old Labour ilk" to watch their backs, or shape up if they were to survive. "I would hope they would sensibly regroup, making sure they are not isolated making sure they have a strong group to withstand attack. Otherwise they should slim down to ten stone, buy a slick new suit and tie and a wee bit of make-up."

Outcry as Bank rejects rate cut

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

UNIONS and bosses turned their fire on the Bank of England yesterday after it rejected calls for a reduction in the cost of borrowing and left interest rates at 7.5 per cent.

John Monks, the TUC General Secretary, led a chorus of criticism of the Bank's decision. Ken Jackson, of the engineering workers' union, called it "industrial vandalism". It was predicted that Eddie George, the Bank of England governor, will get a rough ride at the TUC conference in Blackpool next week.

Mr Jackson said: "Working people will want to hear him explain why the Monetary Policy Committee ignores industry and threatens the jobs of ordinary people. The MPC lives in the world of statistics, while working people have to survive in the real economy."

Ian Peters, deputy director general of the British Chambers of Commerce, said that

the decision would bitterly disappoint business, which had hoped for a rate cut to ensure that the pound's downward trend was sustained. "Business will have to continue to endure the slow torture caused by high interest rates, a strong pound and economic turmoil abroad."

Tim Melville-Ross, director general of the Institute of Directors, said: "I am very disappointed that the Bank has not reduced interest rates by at least 0.25 per cent if not 0.5 per cent."

John Redwood, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, on a visit to the North East, said that Labour's policies were harming its industrial heartland. "It is their interest rates, through the Bank of England, that are determining the future of manufacturing; their sterling rate policy, or lack of one, that is doing the damage."

Ministerial double-act gets the call

By VALERIE ELLIOTT
WHITEHALL EDITOR

JACK CUNNINGHAM, the Cabinet's "enforcer", and Margaret Beckett, Leader of the House, are being groomed to become official spokesmen for the Government.

Tony Blair wants the two senior ministers to kick off their new high-profile roles at the Labour Party conference in Blackpool later this month, where they are expected to share main interviews with television and radio.

They will also take part in a series of public meetings throughout the country in the coming months. The Government is keen to expand its contact with the regions, and separate itineraries for each minister are envisaged so most of the country can be covered.

Their appearances and speeches will be organised to complement those made by Mr Blair.

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Breath test will revolutionise visits to doctor

BY MARK HENDERSON

A REVOLUTIONARY breath test that allows doctors to diagnose common illnesses without waiting days for blood or urine sample results is being developed by British scientists and could be available within two years.

The breathalyser, which initially will test for different strains of the common cold within minutes, is likely to be available to hospitals by the end of 2000. A hand-held version is planned for 2002, allowing GPs to make on-the-spot diagnoses that will save the health service millions of pounds in drugs bills and combat the rise of "superbugs" resistant to antibiotics.

The test, which registers odours in a patient's breath specific to different kinds of cold, will mean doctors can say with certainty if a patient has an infection that would benefit from antibiotics.

Breath tests for other illnesses are likely to be developed.

At present, doctors estimate that as much as 60 per cent of the annual £34 million bill for antibiotics in England alone is wasted on patients with viral colds for which the drugs are ineffective. The test will also help to contain superbugs by reducing their exposure to drugs and limiting their capacity to develop resistance.

Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, and Sir Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer, warned doctors last week to limit antibiotic prescriptions for coughs, sore throats and colds because of fears that more bacteria were developing resistance.

Imperial College London announced a commercial partnership yesterday with the biotechnology group Klotech to develop the technology, which largely exists already,

into a useable device. Their researchers are also working on a similar test for asthma, which measures the extent of the inflammation that causes breathing difficulties rather than the symptoms, allowing more accurate diagnosis and more appropriate treatment.

Peter Openshaw, Professor of Experimental Medicine at the college's National Heart and Lung Institute, said the technique would revolutionise diagnosis. "It gives GPs the ability to tell patients that they do or do not need antibiotics."

It's also a key weapon in the fight against superbugs. In ten years' time it will seem archaic to send away for tests.

George Dodd, director of research and development at Klotech, said most of the technology needed for the breathalyser already existed and needed only to be brought together across disciplines.

The egg with its heart in the right place

BY ROBIN YOUNG

CONSUMERS could soon be going back to work on an egg with confidence that it will help their health, not harm it.

What are claimed to be healthier eggs — rich in omega 3 essential fatty acids and capable of reducing blood pressure, blood clotting and heart arrhythmia — are going on sale this week.

Columbus eggs have been developed by Belovo, a Belgian egg-processing company. Already 60,000 hens, producing 750 cases of eggs a week, have been converted to Columbus egg production. The eggs are going on sale this week, at 10p a half-dozen more than standard eggs.

The egg's secret, according to Fabien de Meester, managing director of Belovo, is in the birds' diet, replicating what free-wandering birds would eat in the wild. He said: "The rudimentary lymphatic system of the chicken transfers the balanced fatty acids to the yolk of the egg."



Fabien de Meester: the secret is in the chicken's diet, which is what free-wandering birds eat in the wild

Dr de Meester said that fatty acid ratios in the human diet had been maintained in equilibrium until, in the last century and a half, the wide

spread use of vegetable fat and oils made the diet very poor in omega 3 acids, the fatty acids in oily fish.

Omega 3 fatty acids are believed to play a vital role in reducing the risk of heart disease by reducing blood

pressure, reducing the tendency of blood to clot, and protecting against irregular heart beats. They are also thought to be important in the development of the brain and the eye.

When Columbus eggs are

broken the yolk appears larger and flatter because it is less viscous. The colour is also paler because the birds are not given chemicals to enhance the yolk colour. They keep just as long as standard eggs.

Health care staff call for a 22% pay rise

BY MARK HENDERSON

HEALTH unions will demand a 22 per cent salary rise over three years for non-medical professionals today, ignoring for the second time this week government calls for pay restraint.

Unions representing professions allied to medicine, such as physiotherapists, radiographers and chiropodists, will make the claim in evidence to their independent pay review body.

The pay claim follows the British Medical Association's call on Wednesday for a 10 per cent rise for doctors, repeated for five years. Nurses are expected to ask for a substantial award during the next week. The demands are likely to be resisted by the Government, which said in July that its £21 billion investment in the NHS was for patient care, not staff salaries.

The Professions Allied to Medicine union said that a significant award was needed to halt a recruitment and retention crisis worse than in any other sector of the NHS. A union survey found that only one in ten health professionals expected to be working in the NHS in three years' time. Two thirds of those planning to leave cited pay.

£2.5m for cancer screening scheme

BY IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is to spend £2.5 million to investigate setting up a national screening programme for bowel cancer.

The money is for two pilot studies — one each in Scotland and England — for up to three years, each covering a population of about one million. Screening will be offered every two years to everyone between 50 and 69, the age when the disease is most likely to occur.

The disease is the second most deadly cancer and kills nearly 20,000 people every year. About 30,000 people annually are found to be suffering from bowel cancer, including 6,000 under the age of 60. Early detection and treatment offer the best hopes of a cure.

Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, said yesterday that the pilot scheme was an opportunity to gauge its feasibility and whether it was acceptable to the public.

"It is time to break the taboo of bowel cancer. Tens of thousands of people are suffering in silence, too embarrassed to tell their husbands, wives and doctors. But when it is caught early, bowel cancer is one of the most curable of all cancers."



the sunflowers fall '98

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Experts back new tests for hidden BSE

THE Government's advisory committee on Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease has recommended a new series of tests on cows that appear healthy but may be carrying the agents that cause "mad cow" disease.

The tests are the suggestion of John Collinge, of St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, in West London, who has developed a technique that can be used to test samples from cows quickly and cheaply. The specimens would come from healthy cows slaughtered in abattoirs without any hint that they may be incubating BSE.

The idea is to investigate whether there are some cows that carry the infective agent

Reports by
Nigel Hawkes
and Nick Nuttall

for long periods, but never suffer symptoms. If such sub-clinical cases exist, it is possible that many cows could remain infectious even when the BSE epidemic is over.

Dr Collinge's test, using a technique called Western Blot, detects the aberrant prion proteins that are responsible for BSE or new-variant CJD, the brain disease that is the human equivalent of BSE. It is much quicker than the classical methods for testing infectivity, which have involved

injecting mice with brain material from cows and waiting for them to become ill.

Professor John Pattison, chairman of the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (Seac), told the British Association for the Advancement of Science's festival in Cardiff yesterday that the research had the approval of his committee and that a recommendation backing it had gone to the Ministry of Agriculture. It seems highly unlikely to be turned down.

Professor Richard Lacey, a long-term critic of the ministry's approach to BSE, believes that the number of cases is being underestimated. He has urged an even larger series of tests, on material taken at random from abattoirs, to check this. "For years I have been asking for systematic surveys in abattoirs, but they have never been done," he said yesterday. "I cannot understand why."

Other members of Seac are more sceptical about that approach. Professor Roy Anderson, of Oxford University, said that he still believed the BSE epidemic was close to its end, and would be at an extremely low level by 2001. He added that Dr Collinge's test needed further validation before it could be relied upon.

□ Poverty, starvation and unemployment in the developing world will all rise if genetically engineered crops become widespread, the festival was told.

Professor Martha Crouch, a biologist and former genetic engineering researcher at the University of Indiana, said claims that gene-modified plants could feed the world in the 21st century were a myth.

Genetic engineering was turning animals into factories and machines. It perpetuated the planting of vast fields of identical, monoculture crops which were harming the environment and wildlife and undermining rural cultures across the globe, she said.

"This machine model of nature would be fine if that was what nature was like. But nature is not like that and it is going to cause a lot of problems."



Touch and go: the user can select tonight's viewing and tomorrow's groceries with the appliance of the future

BY NICHOLAS BOOTH

ANYONE who has ever wanted to cook a meal, pay the gas bill, do the shopping and watch the latest episode of *Coronation Street* without climbing down from their kitchen stool will soon have the perfect gadget.

British researchers have developed the Microwave Bank — an oven connected to the Internet and with a screen in its door. As well as combining TV dinners with TV programmes, the machine will enable the user to order goods or make financial transactions via the Net. Stephen

Just the thing for those TV dinners

Emmott, of NCR, which makes hole-in-the-wall cash dispensers, said: "You could watch *Della Smith* and follow her instructions if you wanted. You can bake your cake, eat it and replace the ingredients you've used."

The Microwave Bank will respond to instructions using voice recognition software. For anyone who actually

wants to lift a finger, it will also have a touch-sensitive screen. The working prototype has a barcode scanner for ordering groceries.

NCR's Knowledge Lab developed the idea to help to ease the pressure on banks, which can offset the cost of keeping branches open by offering services via the Internet. Although banks

have been encouraging customers to take up the offer of such services there is resistance to change.

"Only 30 per cent of homes have personal computers," Dr Emmott said. "But our research has shown that consumers who refuse to use a PC take to the Microwave Bank like a duck to water."

Ease of use would be the key to the machine's success. "People are familiar with the Microwave — they are comfortable with it," he said. A production version would cost between £600 and £700 — about the same as a top of the range microwave oven.

Alert over smoking in pregnancy is ignored

By IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

FIVE out of six women smokers ignore warnings that they are damaging their unborn child when they become pregnant, according to a study published today. The findings suggest it will be impossible to meet the Health Department's target that at least a third of women smokers will stop when they know they are pregnant.

The survey is the latest in an annual series by the Health Education Authority. It shows that last year only one in six women gave up smoking when they became pregnant, the same proportion as in 1992, when the campaigns began. Only one woman in ten gave up immediately before becoming pregnant, despite advice that those who want to have a baby should not smoke while trying to conceive.

The highest rate of smoking is among the 15 to 24 age group, of whom three quarters were from manual or unemployed groups, compared with about three fifths among the 25-30 group and two fifths of those aged over 30. "Our findings suggest that current practice to reduce smoking during pregnancy is either not working or lacks sufficient investment and prioritisation to be effective," the report in the *British Medical Journal* says.

American research published last month shows that mothers who smoke pass a nicotine-derived carcinogen called BBNK to babies in the womb.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION

£30m to wipe out mink

Mink could be eliminated from Britain, but the operation would cost £30 million, the association was told. Professor Morris Gosling, of the Zoological Society of London, said: "Mink can be caught in traps baited with fish. But it would be a lengthy and labour-intensive task." David MacDonald, of Oxford University, said that the release of thousands of mink from a New Forest fur farm would add few to the wild because most would die.

Star travel delay

Professor Frank Close, of the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in Oxfordshire, has worked out that it would take only 20 kilograms of antimatter to power a spaceship to the stars. Unfortunately, it would take 10,000 times longer than all recorded history for CERN, the European Particle Physics Laboratory in Geneva, to provide the fuel.

Jurassic Park insect find

An extinct and unknown species of mayfly has been found in Mexico, perfectly preserved in 25 million-year-old amber. Andrew Ross, a curator at the Natural History Museum, said that the insect, which has yet to be named, would have lived just a few hours before becoming trapped in the ancient tree resin.

Stradivarius discord

A Stradivarius is no better than any other well-made violin, according to Benard Richardson, of Cardiff University's physics and astronomy department. Although many people thought there was "something magical" about the 18th-century instruments, studies had shown that secret, long-lost, skills had not been used to make them.

Courts will sit in session on the Internet

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

PEOPLE will resolve many legal disputes over the Internet from their homes, rather than going to court, under plans unveiled yesterday.

Geoff Hoon, Minister of State at the Lord Chancellor's Department, outlined proposals that envisage "virtual" court hearings in which people can communicate with the judge and lawyers over the Internet via their television sets. Many of the traditional trappings of justice — including legal documents, books, papers and court

hearings — are likely to disappear. The proposals put forward in the consultation paper, *civiljustice*, form the first draft of an information technology strategy for the next 15 years. Judges and lawyers will still be needed. But much routine legal work will be computerised and packaged as an online product, such as drafting standard contracts and agreements.

The paper asks: "Is it the physical courtroom with associated trappings that is important to most people, or is it the confidence that their dispute is being addressed by an appropriate, impartial person?" Many more cases

could be disposed of via "virtual" hearings that could be less daunting and more cost-effective for certain kinds of grievance, such as many tribunal claims. The paper suggests that people would obtain far more legal advice and information online than from lawyers, using computer kiosks or terminals in shopping malls and courts, and via the Internet.

The paper suggests the creation of a website to act as an online civil justice service, a first port of call for anyone seeking information or advice on legal problems. Lawyers would also have to change the way they work, and move

away from providing a high-cost advice service billed by the hour. Legal products for mass consumption would be developed online and legal services sold in high volume at lower prices.

The paper says there is a large unmet need for legal services that might be better served by online legal services providing "affordable, jargon-free legal help at the fingertips of large numbers of clients across the World Wide Web."

Responses to the paper are invited by December 18. The paper is on the department's website: www.open.gov.uk/lcd/index.htm

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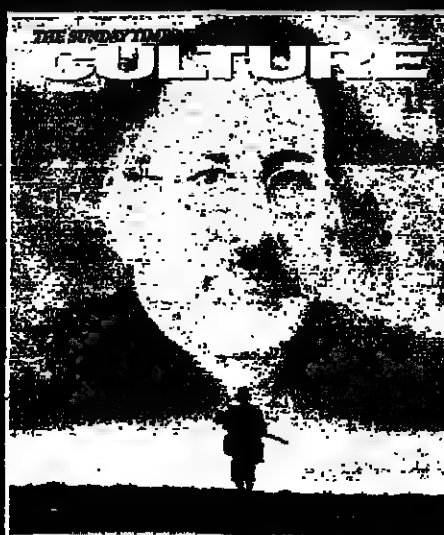
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THE SUNDAY TIMES



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THE TIMES FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1998

Yeltsin bows to Duma's wishes over Primakov

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S damaging political stalemate ended in a compromise yesterday when President Yeltsin bowed to parliament and selected Yevgeni Primakov, his former Foreign Minister, to become Russia's next Prime Minister. The appointment was widely welcomed by Russian leaders across the political spectrum, who promised to confirm Mr Primakov this afternoon in parliament. Mr Yeltsin put forward his name after dropping Viktor Chernomyrdin, the unpopular acting Prime Minister, whose nomination was rejected twice by the Duma — the lower house of parliament. Although the climbdown was a blow to the Kremlin leader's authority, Mr Primakov is a good alternative. As the longest serving Cabinet

minister, who previously ran the foreign intelligence service, he has experience and credibility, without posing a threat to Mr Yeltsin's position. As Foreign Minister for the past two and a half years, he successfully reoriented Russia's policy away from the West, an achievement which made him popular with Communists and nationalists alike. His nomination yesterday, after nearly two weeks without government in Russia, had an immediate stabilising effect on the country's economic crisis. The rouble continued to strengthen against the dollar and shares even staged a modest rally on the beleaguered Moscow Stock Exchange. However, there were fears that Mr Primakov would be

unable to address the fundamental political and economic problems facing Russia over the coming months. There is a growing consensus that Mr Yeltsin is no longer fit for office and should not be allowed to complete his term which expires in 2000. Also, only a powerful and courageous leader will be able to impose the tough measures necessary this winter to combat further devaluation and hyperinflation. The 68-year-old former spy chief is untested on economic policy. But yesterday Russians were simply pleased to have a credible figure in place who could end the paralysis at the heart of government and who appeared to have solid support. His nomination was championed almost unanimously.



Yevgeni Primakov, who was nominated yesterday as the new Russian Prime Minister, pictured on a visit to London as Foreign Minister earlier this year

Spy boss won the confidence of US

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

JOURNALIST, spy, academic, linguist and diplomat — Yevgeni Primakov has tried a whole range of professions in his long career and excelled at all of them before being nominated yesterday as Prime Minister by President Yeltsin. There is one significant omission from the list: Mr Primakov has never worked as an economist, a factor that might call into question his ability to extricate Russia from its current economic crisis and arrest the fall of the rouble. But this is not expected to impede his approval by the Duma. Perhaps his greatest skill over the years has been to win trust and confidence across the political spectrum. That is only to be expected from a man who rose through the Communist Party hierarchy under Leonid Brezhnev, continued to prosper in the perestroika years under Mikhail Gorbachev and then survived the fall of Communism to be appointed chief of the Foreign Intelligence Service and then Foreign Minister by Mr Yeltsin. Even Grigori Yavlinsky,

leader of the liberal Yabloko faction and an avowedly anti-interventionist market economist, threw his support behind Mr Primakov. Mr Primakov himself can scarcely be said to be relishing the prospect of heading a new Russian government, but if he takes on the job — and it can be safely assumed that he will — he is likely to throw himself into it with energy and dedication. In 1996, when he was moved to the Foreign Ministry to replace Andrei Kozyrev, who was then regarded as too pro-Western, initially hostile officials at the US State Department, were impressed by the thoroughness of his briefing and by his negotiating skills. His relationship with Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, has flourished, despite wide differences between Russian and US foreign policy over the expansion of Nato and Iraq. The contacts he built up during more than 30 years of involvement with the intelligence services give him a formidable knowledge of leaders abroad as well as politicians at home.

Pope blesses Rome plan to serve up 'Millennium menu'

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE Vatican, which recently gave a reminder that the millennium is less than 500 days away, yesterday gave its blessing to a "Millennium menu" for visitors to Rome in 2000 that will include medallions of beef à la cardinal, Stine Chapel mushrooms and pilgrims' pudding. The four-course "Holy Year meal" is a far cry from the simple fare once offered to pilgrims who made the journey to Rome in the Middle Ages. It will be served by 400 Rome restaurants which have agreed to take part in the scheme. The meal will cost £10 a head for the estimated 27 million people expected to attend celebrations marking the millennium, which the Pope has declared a Holy Year, or Jubilee. The Pope wants the Jubilee to focus on a renewal of Christian values rather than secular celebrations, but millennium plans in Rome have been marred by rows over a number of grandiose construction and transport projects, many of which have ground to a halt because of planning disagreements, failure to release funds, or objections by the Superintendent of Archaeology. Traffic around St Peter's is already chaotic

because of work on a new underground parking area for tourist coaches, and Vatican officials said the prospect of catering for millions of hungry people will provide a further "prospective headache". The Association of Rome Restaurateurs said it had offered to help by agreeing an official budget menu. "People will need a proper sit-down meal after tramping the streets of Rome," Roberto Carosi, the head of the association, told *La Repubblica*. "Many will be tempted by a snack at pizzerias and fast food outlets, but this will not give them enough calories". Wine is on top of the £10 cost, with the organisers recommending Fontana di Papa, a refreshing, dry white wine produced in the Frascati hills near Castelgandolfo, the Pope's summer residence outside Rome. A typical meal might consist of penne dell'angelo, a pasta dish with courgettes, anchovies, raisins, pine nuts and mozzarella; abbacchio del cambrlengo, or papal chamberlain's lamb, lamb cutlets fried in egg and breadcrumbs with a creamy sauce made of artichokes, mint, parsley and garlic; salad and pudding.

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LONDONDERRY NOW OPEN

Pakistan asks MPs to back test ban treaty

FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN ISLAMABAD

PAKISTAN has summoned an emergency joint session of parliament today to seek approval of a decision to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) which will lead to the lifting of economic sanctions imposed against it after it conducted nuclear tests.

Government sources confirmed last night that a decision in principle had been taken by the country's top civil and military leadership earlier this week. Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister, later conveyed his Government's willingness to halt nuclear tests to President Clinton by telephone on Tuesday.

Pakistan hopes that the commitment will lead to the resumption of financial aid and loans from the United States and multilateral financial agencies. The sanctions, which were imposed by the Group of Eight countries in May, have seriously hit the country's fragile economy and pushed it to the brink of a total breakdown. Islamabad's commitment to accept the treaty was the main precondition for easing sanctions.

The real question was when, rather than if, Pakistan accepts the treaty, a senior

government official was quoted as saying. However, the Government has not yet made the decision public for political reasons. "We have left it to parliament to take a decision on the issue," said Mushahid Hussain, the Minister for Information.

The Government, which commands a comfortable majority in parliament, is not likely to face any problem in securing approval. The main opposition Pakistan People's Party, led by Benazir Bhutto, has also indicated that it would favour signing the treaty. However, the Government may face some opposition from the right-wing Islamist groups which have threatened to launch a nationwide agitation if the Government signs the treaty. But these groups do not have any significant representation in parliament.

The parliamentary debate is expected to last three days. The Government wants to get parliamentary approval on the issue before Mr Sharif's scheduled meeting with President Clinton in New York on September 21.

Most analysts agree that Pakistan's decision was largely dictated by economic compulsion. "Without accepting

the ban on nuclear tests, Pakistan cannot have access to low-interest loans from the International Monetary Fund," says Samina Ahmed, a leading security analyst. "The signing of the treaty will not affect Pakistan's nuclear capability."

An IMF team will arrive in Islamabad today for talks on an emergency relief package. Pakistan needs at least \$3 billion (£1.8 billion) in loans to meet its balance of payments and foreign debt servicing requirements.

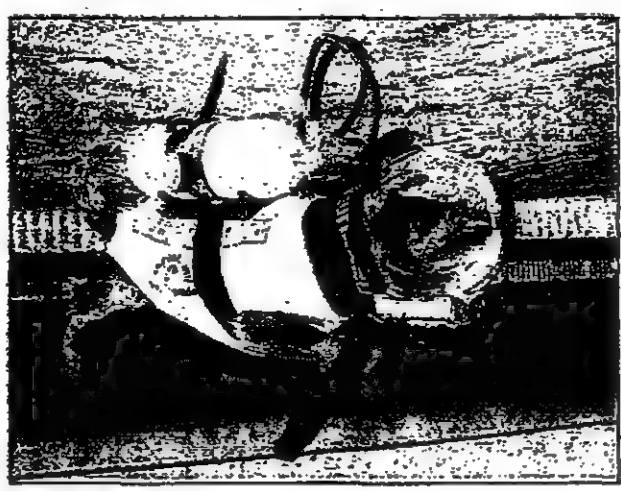
Jerusalem: Israel's Home Front command is going to overhaul its defence strategy in the light of nuclear threats, according to Yitzhak Mordechai, the Defence Minister (Christopher Walker writes).

Pakistan's nuclear capability has led to widespread fears that nuclear knowhow may be transferred to Israel's main enemies, notably Iran.

Yesterday's announcement of a rethink in defence strategy came only 24 hours after publication of the disclosure by Scott Ritter, the former top United Nations arms inspector, that Iraq is hiding three nuclear bombs that are technologically complete.



Hooch, the sky-diving dog, in action with her owner, Sean Herbert, before having to give up her hobbies



Flying dog grounded

Sydney: She jumped out of aircraft, swam underwater but had to end her hobbies when she fell out of bed. For Hooch is a seven-year-old dog and the vet barred any more escapades when she broke a leg jumping off the bed of Sean Herbert, her owner. "The vet said it was time to call it a day," said Mr Herbert. Hooch, a cross between a cattle dog and King Charles spaniel, made 53 parachute jumps and 14 scuba dives.

United States which had made some parachute jumps but never heard of a dog which did both," said Mr Herbert. Hooch's wetsuit and air tank, with a bubble-like helmet, cost \$2,000 (£704) to make and she started her underwater tricks when she followed Mr Herbert into the sea. When she went sky-diving she was attached to her owner with a harness. "I don't think I'll get another dog interested," Mr Herbert said. (AFP)

WORLD SUMMARY

Taleban finds dead Iranians

Islamabad: Taleban said it had found the bodies of nine Iranian diplomats whose disappearance sparked a huge Iranian military build-up on the Afghanistan border. The movement's senior spokesman told the Afghan Islamic Press news agency that Taleban fighters acting independently killed the Iranians and said those responsible would be punished.

It was the first time the radical Sunni Muslim movement had publicly admitted that Iranians had been killed when its fighters captured the opposition stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif last month. Tehran yesterday announced its second important military exercises on the Afghan border in a month. (Reuters)

Rocket fails

Moscow: Twelve communications satellites belonging to Globalstar Telecommunications Ltd. were lost when a Ukrainian Zenit rocket crashed after being launched from Russia's Baikonur cosmodrome. (Reuters)

Britons fly out

Dhaka: The British High Commission is to evacuate 40 British women and children on the next available flights as Bangladesh's floods threaten the capital. The High Commission building has already been flooded. (Reuters)

Fugitive held

Rome: Licio Gelli, one of Italy's most wanted fugitives and former grandmaster of the outlawed P2 masonic lodge, has been captured in Canada. Giorgio Napolitano, the Italian Interior Minister, announced. (Reuters)

Minister rallies

Paris: Jean-Pierre Chevènement, 59, the French Interior Minister, has come out of a coma after more than a week and recognised members of his family, the Val de Grâce military hospital said.

Square deal

Paris: The Place de la Concorde may be turned into a pedestrian precinct. Sources in the Paris Mayor's office say officials are leaning towards a ban on private cars as the best of three plans for the square.

Thin blue whine

Oslo: About 500 Norwegian police will patrol streets here without pay on their day off to protest at lack of manpower and prove how safe the city can be. Fewer than 60 police are normally on patrol. (AFP)

Baghdad threatens sanctions 'battle'

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

A DEFIANT Iraq appeared set last night to escalate its dispute with the United Nations after the Security Council voted to maintain sanctions indefinitely to punish Baghdad for halting co-operation with weapons inspectors. Babel, a leading newspaper run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, called for "decisive action". The Iraqi leadership must "choose the timing of a confrontation and take the initiative in battle", it said. It gave no indication what retaliation Baghdad might take, but the country's rubber-stamp parliament has already proposed cutting all bridges with the UN Special Commission (Unscop), the body set up to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Unscop has been allowed to continue routine monitoring despite a ban on intrusive inspections declared by Saddam on August 5. Disruption of the monitoring programme

would set alarm bells ringing, particularly after claims that Iraq is hiding three technologically complete nuclear bombs and is lacking only the fissionable materials to make them operational. The disclosure was made by Scott Ritter, a senior American arms inspector who resigned last month. Richard Butler, the Unscop chief, has already given a warning that the five-week-old stand-off has meant his men are no longer able to ensure Iraq is not trying to rebuild its weapons of mass destruction.

The state-run Iraqi press has made clear that the Government believes it has nothing to lose by defying the UN and is relying instead on the gradual erosion of the eight-year-old trade embargo. Saddam was also gambling that President Clinton was too distracted and weakened by the Lewinsky affair to take decisive action, diplomats said.

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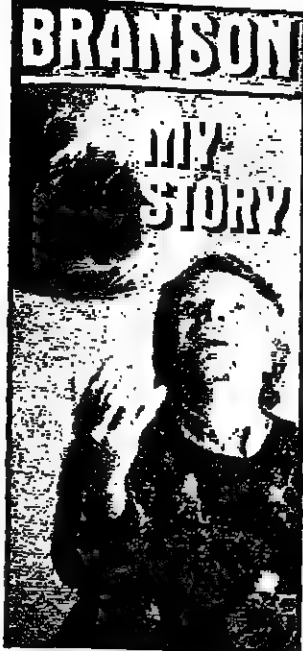
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RICHARD BRANSON: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

At school I was dyslexic and a dunce



In the final extract from his autobiography **Richard Branson** recalls the headmaster who warned him that he would either go to prison or become a millionaire — and how the first part of that prediction came true long before the second

When I was eight I was sent to board at Scitcliffe Preparatory School in Windsor Great Park. At the age of eight I still couldn't read. In fact, I was dyslexic and short-sighted. Dyslexia wasn't deemed a problem in those days — or was only a problem if you were dyslexic yourself. I was soon being beaten once or twice a week for doing poor classwork or confusing the date of the Battle of Hastings.

I was then sent to a crammer on the Sussex coast, Cliff View House. It had no sports to distract boys from the usually hopeless task of preparing for Common Entrance. My only consolation was the headmaster's 18-year-old daughter, who took a fancy to me. Every night I would climb out of my dormitory window and creep over to her bedroom in the headmaster's house. One night I was horrified to see a teacher watching my progress.

The next morning I was summoned to the headmaster's study. "What were you doing, Branson?" he asked.

"I was on my way back from your daughter's room, sir," I replied.

Not surprisingly, I was expelled and my parents were told to collect me the next day. That evening, unable to think of any other way to escape my parents' wrath, I wrote a suicide note saying I couldn't cope with the shame. I wrote on the envelope that it was not to be opened until the next day but gave it to a boy whom I knew was far too nosy not to open it immediately.

Very slowly, I left the building and walked through the grounds towards the cliffs. When I saw a crowd of teachers and boys running after me I slowed down enough for them to catch me up. They dragged me back and the expulsion was overturned.

I then moved to Stowe, a public school in Buckinghamshire for more than 800 boys. One Easter holiday I decided to make some money. We had just moved to Tanyards Farm, a rambling building with many barns and sheds and some land. I talked my friend Nik into the plan. We would plant 400 fir trees at Tanyards Farm. By the Christmas after next, they would have grown to 4ft and we could sell them. We would share the profits equally.

That Easter we planted 400 seeds. We worked out that if they grew to 6ft, we would make £2 a tree, a total of £800, compared with our initial investment of just £5. The following summer we investigated the trees. There were one or two sprigs about ground; the rest had been eaten by rabbits. We exacted dire revenge; we shot and skinned a lot of rabbits and sold them to the butcher for a shilling each, but it wasn't the £800 we had planned.

This failure did teach me something about maths — it was only when I was using real numbers to solve real problems that it made sense. If I was calculating how much a Christmas tree would grow, the numbers then became real and I enjoyed using them. In the classroom I was still a complete dunce at the subject.

I think my parents instilled a rebellious streak in me. I have always thought rules were there to be broken and Stowe had as many rules and regulations as the Army. The headmaster suggested that I air my views in the school magazine but my friend Jonny Gems and I wanted to set up a magazine with a fresh attitude. We wanted to campaign against fagging, corporal punishment and compulsory chapel, games and Latin. Such ideas were too "revolutionary" for the school magazine.

We then thought about linking up with other schools with similar rules. We settled on the name *Student*: this was the era of sit-ins, occupations and demos at universities and polytechnics. My mother lent me £4 as a float against the cost of phone calls and letters, and Jonny's father arranged for headed notepaper with *STUDENT — THE MAGAZINE FOR BRITAIN'S YOUTH* across the top with a symbol of a rising sun. We wrote to the contributors and possible advertisers.

I set up an office in my study and asked the headmaster for a telephone in my room; unsurprisingly, he refused. So I had to use a call box. I quickly discovered a useful trick: if I rang the operator and said the machine had taken my money but my call had been disconnected, I got a free call. Better still, the operator sounded like a secretary: "Mr Branson for you."

I learnt how to pack my sales pitch into five minutes. I started speaking faster, pushing harder. My voice had broken early and nobody guessed that they were talking to a 15-year-old schoolboy.

When I left Stowe in 1967, aged almost 17, my headmaster's parting words were: "Congratulations, Branson. I predict you will go to prison or become a millionaire."

When it became clear that *Student* wasn't likely to be a great money-spinner, I began to think of other ways to develop the name in other directions: a Student conference, a Student accommodation agency.

One thing I knew from those who came in to chat or work for us was that they spent a lot of time listening to music and a lot of money buying records. There was tremendous excitement about music: it was political, anarchic. And I noticed that people who wouldn't spend 40 shillings on a meal wouldn't hesitate to spend that sum on a Dylan album.

When I heard that, despite the Government's abolition of the Retail Price Maintenance agreement, none of the shops was offering discounted records I wondered if we could sell cheap mail-order records through the magazine. The first advertisement appeared in the final edition of *Student* and brought in a flood of inquiries — and more cash than we had ever seen. We decided to come up with another name for the mail-order business, one that would appeal not just to students. "Slipped Disc" was a favourite. Then one of the girls said: "What about 'Virgin'?" We're complete virgins at business.

"And there aren't many virgins around here," laughed another girl. "It would be nice to have one in name if nothing else."

"Great," I decided. "It's Virgin." Looking at the various uses to which we've since put the name, I think we made the right decision. I'm not sure Slipped Disc Airways or Slipped Disc Condoms would have had quite the same appeal.

In spring 1971 I received an order from Belgium for a large number of records. I went to the companies that published them and bought them without paying the purchase tax that we had to pay on records sold in the UK. I then borrowed a van and drove down to Dover to take the ferry to France and then drive on to Belgium. Some papers were stamped at Dover to confirm that so many records had been exported but when I arrived at Calais I was asked for a carnet showing I wasn't going to sell them in France. The British and the French authorities both charged purchase tax on records, while Belgium charged nothing, so the records were, in effect,



Three ages of Branson: clockwise, aiming for new heights at the tender age of two; a prize moment on sports day at Scitcliffe school; student days

bonded stock. I was forced to go back to Dover, the records still in my van.

On the way to London, it dawned on me that I was carrying records that had apparently been exported; I had the customs stamp to prove it. I had paid no purchase tax on these records so I could sell them either by mail order or at the Virgin shop and make about £5,000 more than I could have done by the legal route. Two or three more trips and we would be out of debt.

One day I set off for Dover again. Once my papers were stamped I drove around the dock and headed for London. It never occurred to me that I wasn't the only person who had stumbled across this scam.

The phone rang at midnight. The caller said I was about to be raided by Customs and Excise. We ran in and out of the warehouse, carrying records to the van. We had assumed that the officers would raid only the South Wharf warehouse so we took the records to the Oxford Street shop and put them in the racks to be sold. We had no idea that Customs has greater powers of immediate search than the police. I was charged under the Customs and Excise Act 1952. Part of my Stowe headmaster's prediction had come true: I was in prison.

That night was one of the best things that ever happened to me. I have always enjoyed breaking the rules. I had lived life on my own terms. Now I was in a cell and dependent on somebody else to open the door. I vowed that I would never again do anything that would cause me to be imprisoned — or to cause me to be embarrassed.

● *Edited extract from Losing My Virginity: The Autobiography by Richard Branson, to be published on September 17 by Virgin Publishing at £20. Times readers can buy it for £18 by calling 0990 134459. Copyright Richard Branson 1998*

I wrote a suicide note and gave it to a nosy boy

Swimming for our lives

KRISTEN and I had been married for two years when we went on holiday to Mexico to try to patch up our failing marriage.

One night some other tourists told us that this was the best place in the world for marlin and sailfish. We agreed that we would ask a fisherman to take us out the next day, but the fishermen were wary about going out. They explained that there was the possibility of a storm.

"Come on, we've only got a couple more days here," I pleaded. "We'll pay you double." They accepted, and together with the two other tourists, we set out. Before long, the clouds gathered and it soon became clear that we were going to be caught up in the predicted storm.

The fishermen started up the engine to head home but the boat started drifting

around in circles. The rudder had jammed. The sea rose around us and the waves started breaking over the stern. The boat was being so badly smashed up that we were sure she would sink.

After an hour of the worst storm any of us had ever experienced, the wind and rain abruptly stopped. It was eerily still. We must have been in the eye of the storm. Then we saw the other side of the storm coming, growing more threatening as it came nearer.

"Richard, I think we should swim for it," Kristen said. "This boat won't take another storm."

We argued with the fishermen and the tourists, who disagreed. The shore was about two miles away. The sea around us was a ugly, matt black colour, swelling high and boiling, with white foam flecked across the surface. I

was terrified but I decided that Kristen was right.

We all wished each other the best of luck and then Kristen and I jumped overboard. We had swum in the stormy sea for almost three hours by the time we hauled our way up through the surf and collapsed on to the sand.

Eventually we found the captain of the local car ferry. He agreed to go out to try to rescue the fishing boat. Within 15 minutes the second storm hit. It was far worse than the first and it picked up the car ferry and tossed it around like a toy. After ten minutes the captain told us that he was turning back.

The fishing boat was never found. Two fishermen and two tourists drowned. I had to learn to live with the question of whether the fishermen would have gone to sea that day if it hadn't been for us.



Richard and Kristen Branson

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Hildegard's ministry for women

Daniel Johnson on a medieval media nun with attitude

It is a striking photograph: 37 of the richest people in America, all media barons and worth \$1.4 trillion between them, captured for posterity by Annie Leibovitz of *Vanity Fair*. But the most striking thing about it is that only one of these Croesuses is a woman: Katharine Graham, the octogenarian proprietress of *The Washington Post*. Her splendid isolation is a reminder that, even at the end of the 20th century, men still call most of the shots. Feminism, the sexual revolution, the rise of the career woman — they have changed the division of labour, far less that of power.

This week I have been reflecting on another exceptional woman, who made her name in a culture which made no pretence of sexual equality. Hildegard of Bingen, the prophetic, was born 900 years ago in 1098 and died at the Neustorion age of 81 in 1179. Enclosed in a cell with an anchoress, Jutta, at the age of eight, she remained a member and then head (she never called herself "abbess") of a growing community of nuns attached to the monastery of St Disibod, until in 1152 she led her noble virgins to found a new convent beside the Rhine.

In her long, turbulent life she broke every taboo while remaining strictly within the rules of mother Church: admonishing Popes and emperors, travelling around the Rhineland on preaching tours, writing on science and medicine (the *Causae et Curae*), defying abbots and archbishops at a time of war between Church and State. Her ruminations-like visions, which she (for a skilled artist working under her supervision) depicted vividly in the illuminated manuscripts of her works, have been the subject of modern medical as well as theological study. She dispensed advice, therapy and futurology to the greatest and the humblest: a 12th-century combination of Marpe, Procrustes, Mystic Meg and Mother Teresa. Her canonisation was never completed, but she has always been revered as a saint anyway.

Hildegard's *Ordo Virtutum*, superbly performed at the Proms on Tuesday by the Cologne-based ensemble *Sequentia*, is the first morality play. Even if she had written or done nothing else, this music drama — a medieval precursor of Wagner's "total work of art" — depicting the soul's anguish, caught between the virtues and the Devil, would warrant a place in history for its author. As perfect an expression of its own epoch as it is president of the future, it adapts the allegorical use of virtues and vices in the Psychomachia of the 4th-century poet Prudentius, but heightens its effect by contrasting the melodious female voices of the virtues and the soul with the spoken male voice of the "dragon of old". *Ordo Virtutum* (for shadows such as seminal myths as Faust and Don Juan, the moral dramas that nourished European civilisation from Dante to Dostoevsky).

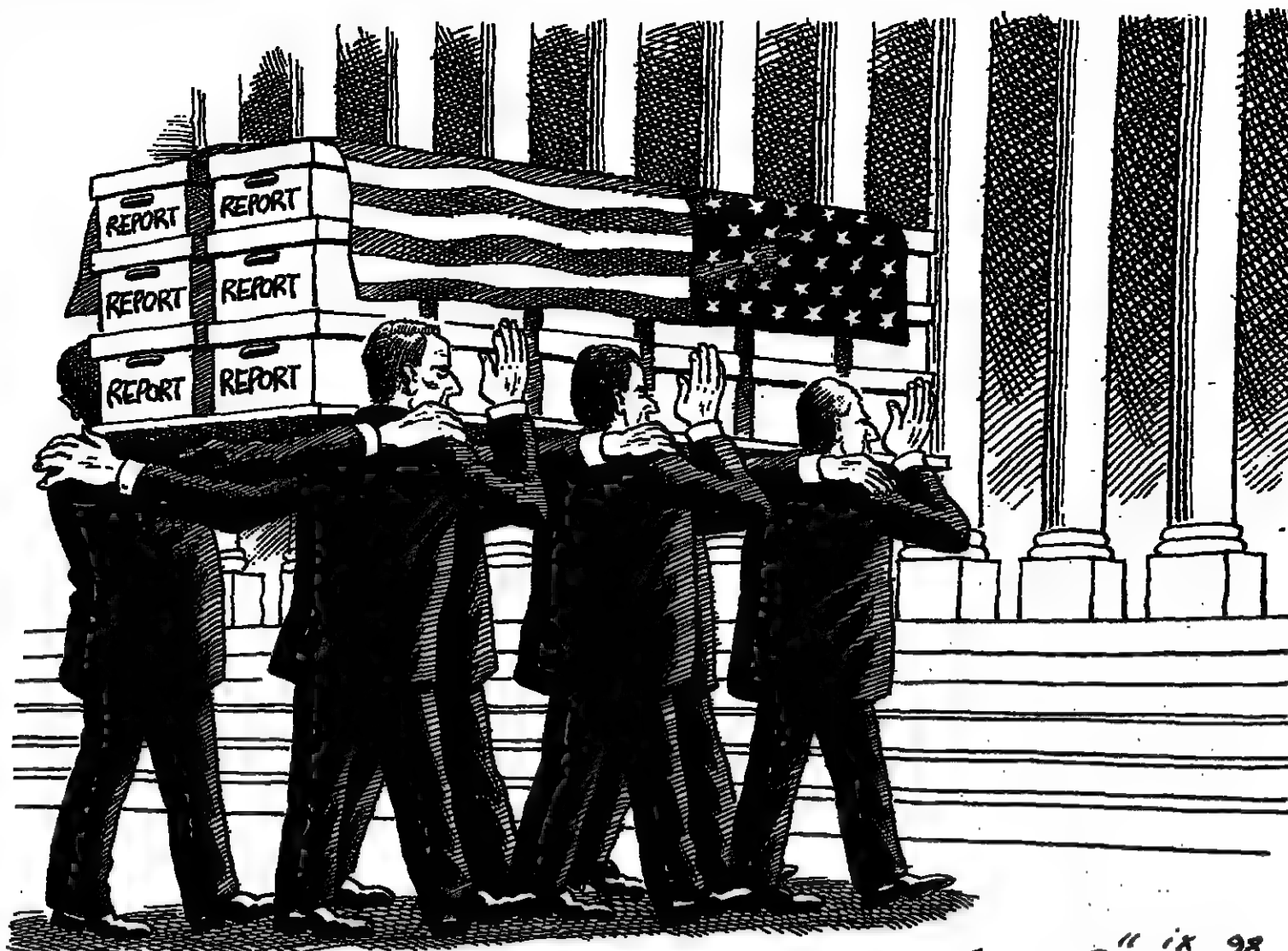
But there was much more to Hildegard than the *Ordo Virtutum*. She wrote some 60 symphonies, or sacred songs, most of which *Sequentia* and other groups have now recorded.

This corpus establishes her as a composer of the first rank, with a unique style that combines utmost simplicity with extraordinary melodic range and virtuosity. Her texts are no less her own, and show a similarly remarkable poetic genius, especially since her limited education vouchsafed her only a rough-and-ready grasp of Latin, and she saw herself as *indocita*, an ignorant woman. Modern (mostly male) scholars assumed that she could not possibly have written the books and musical compositions attributed to her, and that her faithful secretary, the monk Volmar, must have been her ghostwriter. That view rested more on prejudice than evidence.

Indeed, her fame among contemporaries rested on her reputation as a visionary woman of letters, the author of massive works of moral and metaphysical speculation, which in turn would never have been taken seriously had she not held an important position in society. Except through birth or marriage, the role of abbess was the pinnacle of feminine ambition in 12th-century Europe. Hildegard had passed from her first book of prophecy, the *Scivias* (which incorporates parts of the *Ordo*), read aloud by Pope Eugenius III at the Synod of Trier, where she was defended against suspicions of heresy by the great St Bernard of Clairvaux. She corresponded with other Popes, too, including the only English one, Adrian IV. Given the public nature of medieval letters, which were the equivalent of newspapers, she was exercising influence comparable to a modern media *grande dame* such as Katharine Graham.

But celebrity came at a price. Hildegard constantly had humility enjoined upon her by male ecclesiastics, from St Bernard downwards. The superior of another convent, Mistress Tengisch, even wrote her a sarcastic letter, taking her to task for the sin of pride by dressing her nuns in white silk veils and golden crowns, letting them wear their hair unbound, and accepting only rich daughters of the nobility. Hildegard replied with a magisterial missive: "O woman, what a splendid being you are! For you have set your foundation in the sun, and have conquered the world. Virgins, unsullied as they are, cannot be bound by restrictions on dress. They are God's chosen."

At the end of the *Ordo Virtutum*, the Devil has some good lines. He jeers at Chastity, and thereby at the nun's condition: "For your belly is devoid of the beautiful form that woman receives from man; in this you transgress the command that God enjoined in the sweet act of love; so you don't even know what you are!" Celibacy was the sacrifice that Hildegard and her sisters made to achieve independence and, in her case, a rare creativity. Few modern women are bold enough to emulate her renunciation of the world, her *contemptus mundi*, but they should hesitate to feel superior to it. Look again at those male rhyons. Hildegard implies: if you want to beat them, don't join them.



Start packing, Bill

Clinton will blub, but it's much too

late for sentiment, argues Tim Hames

The two black vans that drove the Starr report to Capitol Hill on Wednesday are the hearses of the Clinton presidency. The end is not so much nigh as sitting around impatiently awaiting its moment. The fat lady is not only singing but well into the second verse. Unless Kenneth Starr has produced 445 pages of disappointment, then the final arrival of his document is an unmitigated disaster for the White House. It will take a miracle on an epic scale to save Mr Clinton.

Less than three weeks ago on these pages I argued that the President was finished. His tenure, I contended, would be over by Christmas. At the time I thought this was a rather risky line to take (although nowhere near as dangerous as offering suggestions for the modernisation of the monarchy). It now appears that I was guilty of excessive caution. President Clinton will not be lighting the White House Christmas tree this year. I doubt whether he will preside over the Oval Office turkey at Thanksgiving (late November). At the rate at which Democrats are abandoning him, I believe he has two more weeks left in Washington.

The end will come as the President's enemies close in on several fronts. Mr Starr, the independent prosecutor, is still very much part of the picture. He has ordered back his grand jury to Washington and intends to continue his inquiries even though his handiwork is now with the House of Representatives. This can only mean that he intends to seek indictments against those figures in and around the Clinton White House whom he now thinks he can prove assisted the President in an obstruction of justice. Bruce Lindsay, Mr Clinton's closest political confidant, and Vernon Jordan, the first couple's most intimate private associate, must be very nervous men. They run the risk of imprisonment unless Mr Clinton pardons them as part of a package that includes his own resignation.

The House of Representatives will turn the screw on the President. Members of Congress would much rather Mr Clinton jumped than that they had to push him. In the name of freedom of information they will release the core Starr report to press and public. They will also unveil enough of the corroborating material on Mr Clinton's apparently imaginative trysts with Monica Lewinsky to demolish the President's present ridiculous

contention that while Ms Lewinsky had sex with him, he did no such thing with her. The House will hold back the really sensational material. This will prove an exceptionally useful bargaining chip in the days ahead. Newt Gingrich will then turn over the whole issue of impeachment to the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives and Henry Hyde, its widely respected chairman. The Starr report will thus saturate American television airwaves this weekend. More Democrats will come forward and profess their shock and outrage. The pundit class will dismiss the claim of Mr Clinton's law-

for him to soldier on with any semblance of credibility.

At that point Hillary Clinton, who from the start has been a pivotal player in this saga, will again assume centre stage. There will be a small cabal at the White House urging the President to dig his heels in and withhold his resignation. Take your case to the people, they will encourage him, though it is out until the mid-term elections in November and make those contests a referendum on your future. The mere prospect of that campaign has already gone down with the Democrats like the proverbial lead airship. Nonetheless, it is possible that

if Mrs Clinton were part of this last-ditch camp, the President might be tempted to dare Congress to impeach him.

This may, though, be asking for one act of loyalty too far for the First Lady. She is more than smart enough to realise that the chances of her husband saving himself range from nil to negative. She may regard a free first-class ticket on a kamikaze flight as less than appealing. If she has any ambitions for a meaningful private life, never mind as some speculate a political career, then it is time for her to keep her distance. An improbable alliance of convenience between Mr Starr, Mr Gingrich and Mrs Clinton may yet emerge with the express purpose of ensuring an orderly transfer of power. If so, we really are in the last days of the Clinton era.

It is not difficult to see how the men (and one woman) in grey suits will sell it to the President. If you go immediately, they will contend, there are numerous advantages. You will be seen as acting in the national interests. There will still be many Americans inclined to sympathise with your plight. You will retain some dignity as it would not be necessary for Congress to authorise the publication of every sordid sexual detail. You can pardon your friends. Mr Starr will promise not to pursue you through the courts. You will be acting in the interests of the Democratic Party. You

will be offering your devoted Vice-President Al Gore the maximum opportunity to build his own record. Above all else, the shooting party will note accurately, it will still be possible for you to start another career and even salvage your reputation much as Richard Nixon did after he lost office. The alternative is an impeachment melodrama that will utterly destroy you.

This will be an almost unanswerable case, especially as Mr Clinton's lawyers will be advising him that his legal situation is all but hopeless. From there will come the resignation speech, the last helicopter ride to Little Rock, and Mr Gore's inauguration. In different form Mr Gore will echo Gerald Ford's speech in similar circumstances 24 years ago when he told Americans that "Our long national nightmare is over. Our Constitution works; our great Republic is a Government of laws and not men."

Doubtless, there will then be endless analysis of what the whole Clinton-Lewinsky calamity can tell us about the meaning of modern America. A disproportionate amount of these accounts will be written by those from the Hollywood fraternity who will castigate a small set of religious restraints and accuse them of "moral McCarthyism". Bill Clinton's story, it will be said, is a tragedy worthy of the Ancients. A sad tale of a man with undoubted immense talent tempered by irresistible temptation. Only in the United States, many wise figures will intone, could any of this happen.

There certainly is a wider story here but it is almost embarrassingly simple. It has little to do with sex and everything to do with abuse of power. For most of this year commentators have informed us that a strong economy would save Mr Clinton from his ethical failings. The public, we were told, would not stomach the removal of Wall Street's preferred politician. It was even intimated that Americans had "become French" in their attitude towards sexual conduct. Perjury in the political sphere did not matter much either. All nonsense. To put it crudely, the United States has indeed witnessed a titanic struggle over the past eight months between the Ten Commandments and the Dow Jones Index. The triumph of those few words — "Thou shalt not bear false witness" — is almost with us.

Philip Howard



Setting a cat among the pigeon and mutton pies

In Heaven there'll be no algebras, / No learning dates or names. / But only playing golden harps! And reading Henry James. The beach, however, requires something less heavenly than Henry. His deep streams of unconscious celebration should be read from a garden chair in a stately lawn on a summer afternoon beside a richly garnished teatable and a couple of countesses. The beach calls for a light episodic book that can be dumped fast in order to rescue toddler Tom who has been dumped again by the rollers, or to build another Maginot Line in the sand against the Atlantic.

It should also provide an escape from the flash and crackle of contemporary news. My beach book was a bestseller about the supposed golden age of Victorian values 160 years ago. It propelled a pseudonymous young hack into world celebrity. And its plot concerns a stream of grotesque sexual encounters, vicious mutual abuse by politicians, lawyers and editors, continual misadventures on public transport, and the propriety of eating cats. In a week when the media were full of shock-horror about a Victorian cookbook with recipes for marinated cat, this came as proof that there's nothing new under the sun on the beach.

Felovocacy, or cat-eating is not as new as we suppose. The traditional French nursery rhyme, *Cat la mère Michèle! Qui a perdu son chat, ends in pussy pie*. And there are those who raise an eyebrow at the diet of Woodhouse's Claude Cattermole Potter-Pirbright. He is famous for once biting the cold "game" pie, set on a table in the middle of the Drones dining room, six consecutive times with bread rolls thrown from a seat by the far window. They still speak of Cattermole's emotion when the bread roll he picked up squeaked loudly and a mouse ran out. Strong men had to rally round with brandy. But his nickname was probably made up by wags at the Drones Club making fun of Claude's second name, Cattermole. (Henry Brougham Guppy's *Homes of Family Names in Great Britain*, 1890, lists Cattermole as a name "peculiar to Suffolk, but offers no guidance about its etymology.")

But the *locus classicus* of cat-eating took place at a picnic in Suffolk early in September, fictionally in 1828, published 1836-7. "Werry good thing is weal pie, when you know the lady as made it, and is quite sure it art kittens; and arter all though, where's the odds, when they're so like weal that the wery piemen themselves don't know the difference?" And Sam Weller plunges into one of his stories as tall and hairy as the Beast of Bodmin about how to season a tabby kitten to make a beefsteak, veal, mutton or steak and kidney pie at a minute's notice, just as the market changes and appetites "wary".

The misadventures of Mr Pickwick, the amorous Mr Tupman and the cad Jingle with the fairer sex are not as sexually explicit as today's. And they have a politically incorrect Victorian tendency to find middle-aged spinsters funny. But Rachael Wardle, Miss Witherfield (a middle-aged lady in yellow curlpapers whose bedroom is invaded by Pickwick), Martha Bardell with her breach of promise action, and all the other comely or conniving females would be quite at home in a modern front-page splash.

Pickwickian politicians are as pompous and indistinguishable as today's. Mr Pott, editor of the *Edinburgh Gazette*, "with a face in which solemn importance was blended with a look of unfathomable profundity," could deputise for most of the editors of today's nationals. Mrs Leo Hunter's party for literary lions is just a modern book launch, with everybody looking over everybody else's shoulder to see if there is somebody more important to talk to. And those frantic chases and accidents in post-chaises and wagons anticipate by two centuries our own dear Circle or Northcote Lines. Stop with jerk — tunnel — all fall down — driver says signal failure — station announcer disagrees — suspect package — both inaudible — customers' packed like sardines — dripping sweat not oil — late for work as usual.

It goes on too long. The interpolated ghost and other stories may be skipped. But Pickwick shows that the English character and English news have not changed much in two centuries. Both are funny, in parts.

Face value

THAT proud peacock, Lord Glenconner, has undergone a series of face-lifts. Vanily, however, is not the main reason for his Narcissus complex. Rather, he is telling friends that he underwent plastic surgery in New York because he hopes a younger visage will help his business interests. The Glenconner coffers are so depleted after years of good living on the beach that he is planning to move into a tent on Mustique with his wife, a lady-in-waiting to Princess Margaret, to keep his running costs to a minimum. "He's had several face-lifts," confirms Emma Tennant, his half-sister. Glenconner (right) turned Mustique, a barren, mosquito-ridden rock, into a holiday camp for the jet-set and Princess Margaret in the Sixties. But in the Seventies he flogged most of the island for peanuts and moved into the hotel industry in nearby St Lucia with a bunch of Arabs.

But they quarrelled and he was bought out. "He has that terrific imagination of the aristocrat but no business sense," says an observer. "He virtually gave Mustique away." His state is so wobbly that during the Edinburgh Festival he performed with a gaggle of Caribbean fire-eaters and limbo dancers to raise a bob. When I tried to call him in Mustique, his phone was out of order.

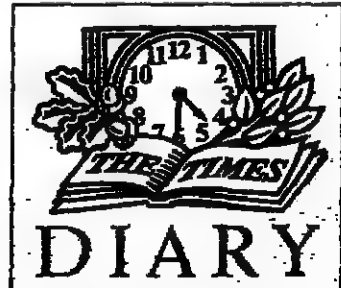
● A TEAM apeing Paul Gascoigne and co is forming. The



Stage invites "big fat lardy boys eating pies and supping 15 pints a night, who do more dribbling with mouths than feet" to join a Midlands brough XI. Lookalikes of Jimmy "five bellies" Gardner, Gazza's thoughtful sidekick, are welcome.

Song of life

HOW embarrassed is George Michael about his arrest for lewd behaviour? The singer (right) has been scouring London parks for a



suitable pitch to record a new video for his next single, *Outside*. Its lyrics give a whole new meaning to public service: "Let's go outside in the moonshine! Take me to the places I love best! And yes I've been bad! You see I think about it all the time! I'd service the community (But I already have you see) I never really said it before."

● JOHN MAJOR has been replaced by a board. Carlton Club visitors yesterday saw a portrait of Major hanging lopsided. Fears that Thatcherites had made a violent gesture have been allayed. "He was displayed downstairs, but we need a new noticeboard."

Worst of times

GEORGE BEST has had a hard night. The thirsty former footballer

says he was having a quick drink with his son Calum in his Chelsea local, The Phenix Arms, "when the doors burst open and a dozen blokes charged in and set about us". Besty tells me: "I think it's the price of fame. Who wants to attack a 17-year-old because his Dad once played for Manchester United?"

Calum, who I presume was on soft drinks, was unharmed, but Best received "a kaleidoscope of bruises". Further domestic problems: the young Mrs Best, Alex, "fell over" and broke her arm working in the new marital flat and is in hospital. A bottle of vodka to speed Besty and his folks to recovery.

● Peter Temple-Morris knew he should defect to Labour after be-



ing handbagged 20 years ago: "I published a pamphlet on abolishing the hereditary principle," he writes in *Tribune*. "Thatcher wheeled around: 'Peter, I have read your pamphlet, and marched off, handbag in hand. I did not see a happy future in the party.'"

Party poopers

IT WAS to be William Hague's triumph — ensnaring lots of political virgins. He proclaimed a target of about 150,000 young members but an internal memo being tossed around Central Office, a copy of which has come my way, discloses that new members under 36 total a paltry few hundred. Tory Central Office is disinclined to make the figure public. "We don't have that information," Handy, that.

● CLAUD VON BULOW has been signed up by The Catholic Herald as a book reviewer. The dandy, who won an appeal against a conviction for trying to murder his wife, will specialise in histories. "He's rather good," I am told. "He is one of about ten Danish Catholics."

Private role

SOPHIE WARD (above) is to come out to her peers. The actress left her



husband for a muscular female with whom, cleverly, she now plans to have a baby. She will unburden herself to the first meeting of the sexuality section of Equity. Open all to thespians, the evening at the YWCA in Holborn will discuss the "interests of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual members". I am told: "They will be discussing issues of portrayal. After all, even *Coronation Street* has had a transsexual character." Me thinks I'm busy that night.

JASPER GERARD



MADISON'S MOMENT

Key decisions for Congress as impeachment looms

The United States boasts the world's oldest and shortest functioning national constitution. That brevity has been the reason for its longevity and is the effective secret of the American Constitution. The language combines high principle with considerable ambiguity. That has allowed each generation the opportunity to recast those words to suit the temper of its time. The fundamental tenets that James Madison and the other founding fathers imparted are as powerful today as they were in the 1780s. In that sense, Americans enjoy a living Constitution. The application of Madison's document is, though, a matter of some flexibility.

This is perhaps especially true of Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution. This states, in a simple fashion, that "The President, Vice-President and all civil officers of the United States shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors." That phrase combines some specific offences with the open-ended notion of "misdemeanors". The meaning of that term will shortly become the centre of Washington political speculation. The President's legal team has already claimed that a report — that it has not yet had the opportunity to read — could not represent grounds for President Clinton's impeachment.

There will be few outside the White House who can accept such a contention. The moving spirit of Madison's text is that public officials should be removed for abuse of office. There can be little doubt that perjury and obstruction of justice, even in the context of a sexual liaison, fall within this definition. It will not help Mr Clinton if he complains that Franklin Roosevelt or John Kennedy conducted adultery without legal sanction. They were never asked to tell the truth on oath about these matters before a grand jury. The President needs to contest the facts,

if he can, not take on the Constitution. The House of Representatives must now decide what to do with the report and boxes of material that Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel, has placed in their possession. This is a solemn occasion that must be shorn of all partisanship. Newt Gingrich, the Speaker of the House, has made an excellent start with the tone he has adopted. He is surely right to seek the release of the central Starr tome to a wider audience. That is much better than the thousand leaks that would have followed if he had taken any other decision. The public has a right to know what it is that Congress is considering.

The central issues for the House now are those of procedure and timetable. The Judiciary Committee will now review what they have received and make more of it available. They will then devote the remainder of this session — which was expected to end in little more than a month — deciding whether to ask the full House to vote on impeachment. That debate cannot realistically take place with mid-term elections in November as the backdrop. Nor can the question be delayed until the new Congress comes together in January 1999. The Speaker will have to be prepared to ask his colleagues to return to their duties shortly after the electorate has spoken.

Even if matters proceed smoothly, American public life will be paralysed in the interim. Neither domestic nor foreign policy can be conducted as usual. The impeachment mechanism might take a number of months to run its course. If the President can demonstrate that the charges of perjury and obstruction of justice are false, and do so in a manner that does not rely on incredible legal constructions, then he is entitled to remain in the White House and fight his corner. If he cannot, he would spare the United States and the world an appalling ordeal if he pre-empted such events with his resignation.

TRAPPIST TORIES

Conservatives for monetary union should speak up or shut up

Tories who support the single currency adopted a new tactic this week: to abstain from the debate. William Hague's decision to hold a snap ballot of all Tory members on the issue challenged the single currency's enthusiasts to make their case. For years they have argued that their views are shared by many Tories throughout the country, and must be reflected in Conservative European policy. But instead of picking up Mr Hague's gauntlet to prove this, they have walked away in a sulk, damaging their cause and credibility.

The supporters of monetary union justify their strategy of non-cooperation in a number of ways. Their tenuous excuses smack of a schoolboy's forged sicknote. Sir Edward Heath claims that Mr Hague is trying to get "his own way without proper discussion within the party". Sir Edward must have slept through the years of noisy internecine warfare that lost his party the last election. Far from there being too little debate, there has been too much. It has raged ever since John Major returned from Maastricht. The arguments for and against Britain's membership have been played out so often they have become the Tories' golden oldies. A clear victory for Mr Hague will allow the Tories a belated "proper discussion" about other important issues, such as welfare reform, the constitution, the family.

The next excuse of the single currency's supporters is based on party loyalty. The ballot's result is a foregone conclusion, they argue, as no loyal Tory would vote against the leadership. This will indeed be the case if there is no campaign to spell out the benefits of the single currency. Kenneth Clarke claims that he "prefers campaigning against the Labour Party than members of my own party". Yet many Conservatives think Mr Clarke is on thin ice to don the mantle of party loyalist: his mischievous and vociferous support for the single currency during the last Parliament rocked the Major Government on a number of occasions. If Mr Hague's policy receives overwhelming

support, will the former Chancellor continue to tour the television studios to attack the party's position?

The ballot will not, as the former minister Ian Taylor claims, "lock in divisions within the party". It is likely to prove that many suspect that supporters of monetary union, who have forced their views upon Conservative European policy, represent a minority of Tories. Mr Hague could legitimately claim that these differences will only be "locked in" if his opponents choose to highlight them.

The most valid criticism is that Mr Hague's ballot will not end the debate over the single currency. The Tory leader is indeed wrong if he believes the result will ensure that Tory divisions are "a legacy of the past". But this does not mean the referendum is a worthless exercise. A good win for Mr Hague will give him the authority needed to claim that he, not Mr Clarke or Michael Heseltine, speaks for the majority of the Tory party.

Advocates of EMU are afraid of this outcome. They are pinning their hopes on a low turnout, so they can argue that the ballot was unrepresentative, thereby giving Mr Hague a pyrrhic victory. This strategy will backfire. They will be accused of lacking the courage of their convictions. If they dare not even put their views to their own party, why should the public listen to them?

Refusal to participate in this debate is the worst course that Mr Clarke, Mr Heseltine and Lord Hurd of Westwell could take. If they care about principle and party as much as they claim, if they believe Mr Hague's opposition to a single currency is misguided, they should enter the fray. If they fail to do so, and then continue to snipe at Mr Hague's policy from the back benches and boardrooms where they now lurk, they will deserve any scorn Tories will heap upon them. To adapt Gaitskill, they plan to abstain and abstain and abstain for the party they love. This is hardly an honourable strategy for the big beasts of the Tory jungle.

HARD SCIENCE

Experiments in the laboratory of the future

This week the British Association for the Advancement of Science is holding its annual festival in Cardiff. The usual complement of unconventional snippets could emerge: aivistic tortoisoes could trot, apparently; and a magnetic man is trying to prove the paranormal by picking up metal with his forehead. But the festival also provides a more serious forum for a rational analysis of ideas. This year scientists are debating with the public about the development of genetically modified foods and elopment of genetically modified issues, exploring ethical and environmental issues.

Professors may wince at a vulgarisation of their life-work. But they must grin and go on, recognising that the prime purpose of the festival is to restore excitement to science. For 100 many years scientists who, when dismissed as lacklustre boffins who, when it came to style or panache, made the general public look like the Bloomsbury set. For too public look like the Bloomsbury set. For too many schoolchildren the teaching of science has been a laboured progress through arid realms strewn with the bleached bones of discarded theories. Only through expanding public understanding can the true challenge or alarm of scientific discovery be reanimated.

At the British Association festival in 1851, an established ethos was shattered by an argument over Darwinian evolution between Bishop Wilberforce and Thomas Henry Huxley. Men who went to bed believing themselves superior spiritual beings awoke the next morning with the knowledge that they were only developed apes. Since then Darwinian theories have informed most understandings of society and its structures.

In the present day, a scientific spokesman such as Richard Dawkins performs a similar function. He may be criticised for his aggressive stance against religion, but by inflaming animosity or inspiring accord, he sharpens the cutting edge of dialogue. Knowledge does not arise from spontaneous intuition. Questions cannot be adequately answered by instinct or emotion. Understanding arises from a balance of scientific appraisal and philosophical judgment. To foster a public understanding of science, therefore, is not simply to encourage an enriching enthusiasm, but to equip a generation to tackle the practical problems and moral dilemmas it will face in the future.

Healthcare under attack in Kosovo

From the Chairman of the British Medical Association Ethics Committee

Sir, There are daily press reports of arrests, disappearances and killings in Kosovo. No reasonable observer can be in any doubt that ethnic cleansing is taking place. What people may not realise is that the assault on human rights stretches into every aspect of daily life, including people's access to healthcare.

The British Medical Association has a long-standing commitment to monitor and expose human rights abuses, particularly where these affect the healthcare of populations, or restrict doctors' freedom to practice.

Last week, the BMA received an authoritative report from the Johannes Wier Foundation, a Dutch medical group for human rights, following a visit to Kosovo. The report details the effects that gross breaches of medical neutrality, and a policy of segregation of healthcare, have had on the health of ethnic Albanians.

The Serb authorities have dismissed Albanian health professionals, which means that ethnic Albanians now have access only to an informal health system, staffed largely by volunteers. They can provide at best a patchy, and at worst a severely substandard pattern of care. The report also documents the disappearance of doctors who have treated war casualties, particularly the Kosovo Albanian military, and the detention of a prominent medical member of the local Red Cross. These actions are in contravention of the four Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols, and should be deplored.

There is a serious lack of effective monitoring of breaches of medical neutrality, both in Kosovo and elsewhere. The BMA has, with other health and human rights organisations, called for the establishment of a UN Special Rapporteur on the Integrity and Independence of Health Professionals.

Meanwhile, the BMA urges the UK Government, as a member of the United Nations and the European Union, to ensure that these abuses of human rights are confronted, and those responsible brought to justice.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL WILKS,
Chairman, BMA Ethics Committee,
British Medical Association,
BMA House,
Tavistock Square, WC1H 9JP,
September 9.

Advising the monarch

From Ms Harriett Perry Robinson

Sir, Tim Hames [report and article, September 7; see also letters, September 9] would make the monarchy not the people's voice but the Government's poodle. He seems to want to replace the "minor aristocracy" in the Royal Household with a fashionable coterie of his own.

The Royal Family have shown themselves recently much more responsive to popular feeling than has any recent elected government. The Royals are the archetypal cross-benchers. If reform of the House of Lords is to be carried through on party lines it is crucial that the monarchy retains its powers and the Royals choose their own advisers.

Yours faithfully,
HARRIETT PERRY ROBINSON,
34 Freshfield Street,
Brighton,
East Sussex BN2 2ZG,
September 7.

From Mr P. M. M. Steiner

Sir, The idea of a plebiscite on the successor whenever a reign comes to an end is impracticable. One of the great advantages of hereditary monarchy is the automatic, immediate and wholly predictable succession ("The King is dead; long live the King").

To introduce uncertainty and delay through an inevitable hiatus makes nonsense of the whole system — unless that is the real aim of the authors of the Demos report. Neither do they seem to have dealt with the embarrassing position of a head of state sworn in after approval by a referendum, with a sizeable minority of anti votes.

Yours faithfully,
F. M. M. STEINER,
5 Chappans Lane,
Deddington, Banbury,
Oxfordshire OX15 0SU,
September 7.

Safety in the air

From Sir Malcolm Field, Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority

Sir, In your leading article of September 2 you state that the West Drayton air control centre has "recorded too many near misses and air incidents for safety" (see also letters, September 4). In point of fact, our assessment of the number of risk-bearing aircraft proximity incidents in which system failure or an error by one of our controllers was a causal factor is 16 in 1996, ten in 1997 and eight so far this year.

I would also point out that UK air traffic control is not responsible for the majority of the flight delays suffered by passengers arriving at or leaving UK airports — fewer than 7 per cent of those during June were attributable to UK restrictions. Progress has

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Menace of 'toxic' spread of bracken

From Professor Emeritus Jim Taylor, Chairman of the Bracken Advisory Commission

Sir, Simon Jenkins (article, August 29) and your correspondents (September 5) dispute the proposed spending by the National Trust of £3.5 million to buy Snowdon. There is a better Welsh cause, in my view, which could substantially improve conditions for hard-pressed hill farmers. I refer to the urgent and on-going need to tackle the encroachment on our countryside by bracken — a weed which curbs biodiversity and detracts from the traditional beauty of our landscape.

Bracken is not only a persistent and obtrusive weed. It is also toxic and carcinogenic. It poses health risks to animals, both wild and domesticated (proven), and possibly to humans (not yet proven, but research continues) during the sporadic period from approximately August 20 to approximately September 21. Bracken areas are best avoided between these dates, and anyone who has to enter them at that time is advised to wear a simple face-mask which will avoid any intake and ingestion of spores.

We await the delayed arrival, early in 1999, of the agri-environment scheme which includes grants for

bracken spraying and still requires ratification by Brussels. In the meantime, bracken advances unchecked in many areas, at rates of 1 per cent to 3 per cent per annum; it covers 110,000 hectares of Wales — equal to the combined areas of the Snowdonia National Park, the Pembrokeshire National Park and Anglesey.

We should be aiming at reversing encroachment, not merely reducing it. The Forest Authority has recently set the pace by providing substantial grants to remove deep bracken and introducing mixed tree plantings, with the emphasis on deciduous species. Parallel grant schemes are required to convert bracken zones into quality pastures.

It would be difficult to identify a more deserving and rewarding cause than this for enhancing the Welsh countryside — restoring good sloped land, increasing farm productivity and profits, reducing environmental health risks and easing the burden for future generations.

Yours etc,
J. A. TAYLOR, Chairman,
The Bracken Advisory Commission,
Clyn Ceiro, Dole, Bow Street,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY24 5AE,
September 6.

High emotion at Manchester United

From Mr Stuart D. Kershaw

Sir, As an expatriate Mancunian who goes way back to the 1948 Cup Final, Mr Murdoch's impending purchase of Manchester United is the best news I have heard in years. Maybe, with him in charge, United can at last start punching its weight.

Over the last seven years or so, since it floated on the Stock Exchange, Manchester United plc has only been successful because the competition from other clubs, in management terms, was woeful. Now it is time to move on.

I suspect the fans who are hostile to this takeover are the same ones who bemoan the fact that the middle classes are about to take over at Old Trafford. Excellent, I say. Where else would the management tolerate a situation where the fans cannot get a ticket, or even if they can, they cannot see the game because people refuse to sit down? This happens every week in the North Stand.

Why would the management be happy to accommodate 56,000 people every week, when 85,000 want to attend?

Yours faithfully,
STUART D. KERSHAW,
Woodlands,
9 Tretawn Park,
Mill Hill, NW7 4PS,
September 6.

From Mrs June Hall

Sir, My grandparents and parents were born in Newton Heath, Manchester, and I lived in the city as a child at the time of the Munich air disaster.

Like many people who moved away, I have continued over the years to support "The Team" in spirit, alongside the majority of my family who remain in Manchester.

After hearing yesterday's news I said something previously unthinkable over dinner to my husband. I told him I actually envied him his team. Having seen him reach the depths of despair as a Manchester City sup-

porter, I suppose we can now wallow in misery together.

Yours,
J. HALL,
3 Wingfield Close,
Ewelme, Oxfordshire OX10 6JY,
September 7.

From Mr David Newton

Sir, When any company is listed it is a simple fact of free-market economics that the share price will fluctuate and companies may, from time to time, become the subject of interest to both buyers and sellers.

People who have their heart in Manchester United Football Club could and should collectively have bought more than 50 per cent of the equity; then, and only then, they would have been in a strong enough position to decline the current advance of the board to accept BskyB's £625 million offer and this emotional dilemma could have been averted.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID NEWTON,
(Non-shareholder of MUFC or BskyB),
The Willows, Cherry Park,
Balloch, Inverness IV1 2HG,
sdjn@aol.com
September 9.

From Mr George Edwards

Sir, I welcome the recent advances to Manchester United, and the continued replacement of football in the mainstream TV schedules with "pay per view", which I can easily avoid.

I wonder if Mr Murdoch would consider bidding for the cricket Test matches, and removing them from BBC Radio 4 to a "pay per listen" station?

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE EDWARDS,
20 Fairways Drive,
Harrowgate,
North Yorkshire HG2 7ES,
gedwards@ismislowe-dev.demon.co.uk
September 7.

Repelling the beasts

From Mr Frank Day

Sir, The midgets at Lake Myvatn (pronounced Mevat) in northeast Iceland (letter, September 9; see also letter, September 5) may well be closely related to those found in Scotland; but in general they do not bite, nor do they buzz like the mosquito, and they are usually only a problem for a short time during the summer months.

They tend to swarm about the head and face, and trying to fan them away with one's hand seems only to attract more of them. The secret is to raise the arm high into the air and to extend one's fingers, as the midgets are attracted to the highest part of the body.

Yours sincerely,
FRANK DAY
(Accountant), Arctic Experience Ltd.,
29 Norfolk Way,
Banstead, Surrey SM7 1PB,
September 10.

Stanching the tears

From Dr D. J. T. Wright

Sir, While holidaying in the South of France this summer, and on being summoned prematurely from my customary 20 lengths of the pool by a request to prepare vegetables for the evening barbecue, I unwittingly stumbled across the solution to a perennial problem.

How do you stop the chopping of onions from making your eyes water? The answer? Swimming goggles.

I offer this discovery to all future sous-chefs and, as a result, believe that the number of the world's minor irritants has now been reduced by one.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Yours faithfully,
DAVID WRIGHT,
Yew Tree House,
Longparish, Andover,
Hampshire SP11 6PT,
September 8.

Church services 'on the cheap'

From the Reverend Ian Gregory

Sir, Of course the Shropshire vicar who overcharged for weddings and funerals should not have done so (report, September 9). We are all under suspicion as a result, and another undeserved black mark is added to the reputation of thousands of diligent, honest clergymen.

It would be interesting to find out, however, how much those who were overcharged were prepared to spend on flowers, photographers, cars, printing, the reception and the honeymoon. In my experience the photographer, for example, asks — and usually receives without question — a great deal more than the £25 which I receive for conducting a wedding; and that includes the preparation visits. I would gladly do it for nothing if I thought the happy couple seriously intended to fulfil their vows, or ever attend the church again.

Most couples never return, which makes me think we are merely being used, and our services are therefore too cheap. Will there still be churches or clergy at all when their children want to enter "the holy estate of matrimony"? Or perhaps marriage will increasingly be a civil, secular, provisional, unholy alliance, and jolly expensive at that.

Yours sincerely,
IAN GREGORY,
18 The Avenue, Baford,
Newcastle, Staffordshire ST5 0LY,
September 9.

The Leach legacy

From Mr Alan F. Gillam

Sir, Jane Schoplin's reference (letter, September 4) to "that magic postwar gathering of artists in St Ives" may be valid but provides a restricted view of the town's art scene today.

As it has been for much of the last century, St Ives is home to one of the most important art colonies in Europe. With around 80 galleries, studios and shops selling original work, it is also reputed to be the third largest art market in the UK. Far from being "defunct", the Leach Pottery is part of this scene, with Trevor Corser and Joanna Watson, who both worked with the Leaches, producing and selling work in the style of and with the same facilities and equipment which they used. In contrast, Barbara Hepworth's studio has become a static display with "hordes of people traipsing through" as your correspondent correctly observes.

The suggestion that the Tate Gallery is involved in "saving" the Leach legacy is not new, although what is usually meant is actually its commercial development as a tourist site. Few would dispute the enormous commercial success of the Tate in St Ives or its benefits to the town's economy; however, its relevance to the current artistic life of the area is a hotly contested local issue.

Perhaps the Leach Pottery buildings are a bit run down and perhaps a more lively teaching role could be developed for the site. But even if it did provide a boost to tourism, the conversion of a working pottery into another museum would do no favours for its current users or original creators, and in the long run would be of no benefit to St Ives.

Yours faithfully,
A. F. GILLAM,
17 Tregenna Terrace,
St Ives, Cornwall TR26 2ND.

Oxford business school

From Professor Bryan Reuben

Sir, Jeremy Dixon, architect of the Oxford business school, is quoted (report, September 4) as saying of its proposed tower: "Ours has to have a function and it will carry illuminated digital faces ... telling the time and the temperature." My recollection is that Queen's and Christ Church already have clock towers, so that leaves only the temperature as unique.

Surely the least we should expect from the school is the FTSE 100, the Dow Jones and the Nikkei indices plus the dollar-pound exchange rate. And what about the latest cricket score from the Parks, a minute-by-minute update of the Nottingham league table of colleges and (please) the time of the next down train from the adjacent railway station?

Yours sincerely,
BRYAN REUBEN,
7 Clarence Avenue, SW4 8LA,
reubenbg@sbu.ac.uk

Spirit Zone

From Mr Nigel R. MacNicol

Sir, Mr A. C. Phillips (letter, September 9) claims that the practice of counting in multiples of ten has nothing to do with religion, and the millennium has more to do with metacognition. Who then created mankind with ten digits, ensuring that from the earliest times all civilisations would reckon in decades, centuries and millennia, and enabling the psalmist (possibly Moses) to declare that thousand years in His sight were like a watch in the night? I offer no opinion as to whether the watch was digital, or had luminous hands.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL MACNICOL,
9 Church Lane, Greetham,
Oakham, Rutland LE15 7NF,
September 9.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
September 10: The Prince Edward, President of the Commonwealth Games Federation, today carried out the following engagements in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, for the XVI Commonwealth Games.

His Royal Highness this morning visited the Selangor Turf Club cricket ground to watch the match between Barbados and Bangladesh, before watching the squash preliminary rounds at the Squash Centre, National Sports Complex, Bukit Jalil.

The Prince Edward this afternoon attended a Lunch for the Commonwealth Games sponsors at the Corporate Hospitality Village, National Sports Complex, Bukit Jalil.

Bukit Jalil. His Royal Highness later visited the International Broadcasting Centre and afterwards visited the Club Aman cricket ground to watch the match between South Africa and Northern Ireland.

The Prince Edward this evening attended the South African Commonwealth Reception at the Mines International Exhibition Centre.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
September 10: The Duke of Kent, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, this morning received Lieutenant Colonel Philip Slack upon assuming command of the 1st Battalion.

Birthdays today

Professor Norman Ashton, FRSC, pathologist, 88; Mr Franz Beckenbauer, footballer, 53; Sir Austin Bide, former chairman, Glaxo Holdings, 83; Dame Margaret Booth, former High Court judge, 65; Mr Paul Cole, racehorse trainer, 57; Mr Brian De Palma, film director, 54; Mrs Mary Fagan, Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, 59; Sir Bernard Feldman, architect, 79; Mr Eddie George, Governor, Bank of England, 60; Lord Gibson-Watt, 80; Mr William Knight, senior partner, Simmons & Simmons, 53; Lord Marlesford, 67; Lord Mayhew of Twynshel, QC, 66; Mr Barry Morris, former motorcycle champion, 48; Sir Neville Simms, Group Chief Executive, Tarmac, 45; the Right Rev John Taylor, former Bishop of Winchester, 84; Mr Roger Utley, former rugby player, 49.

Service luncheon

Kumaon Regiment
Brigadier A.L. Fowler presided at the annual luncheon of the Kumaon Regiment, Indian Army, held yesterday at Over-Seas House, St James's. Lieutenant Colonel P.J. Emerson, Hon Secretary of the Indian Army Association, was among the guests.

Battle of St George's Cay

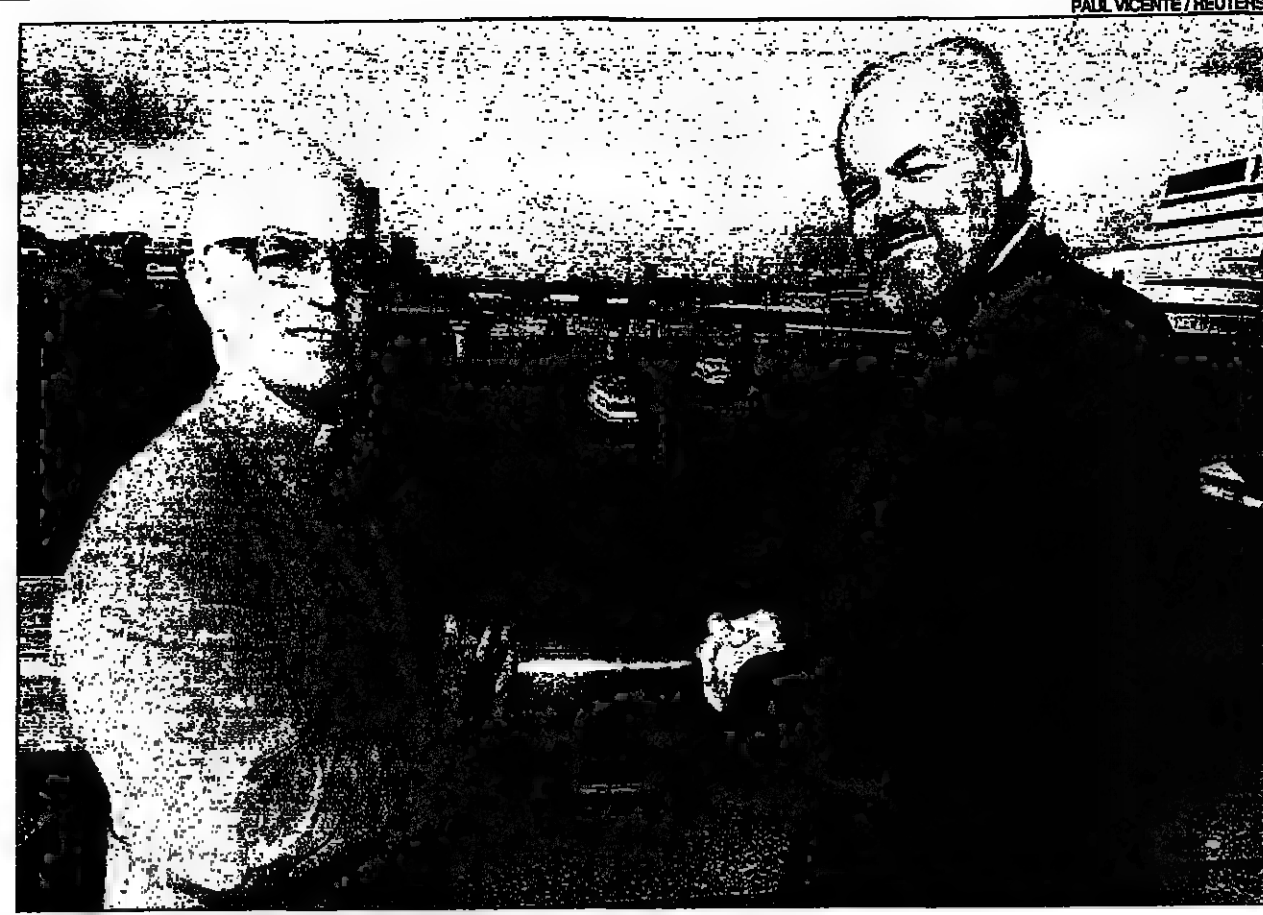
The High Commissioner for Belize was the host last night at a bi-centenary celebration of the national day of Belize (September 21), marked by a re-enactment of the Battle of St George's Cay (September 10, 1798), a reading by Mr Robert Hardy and Beating Retreat on Horse Guards. Later, a reception and Buccaners' Ball took place at the Banqueting House, Whitehall. The Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Tony Lloyd, a Minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, General Sir Michael Walker, Commander-in-Chief, Land Command, and Vice-Admiral A.W.J. West were among the principal guests.

Service dinner

Royal Yeomanry
General Sir Jeremy Blacker, Honorary Colonel of the Royal Yeomanry, presided at the inaugural dinner of the Regiment's Officers' Dining Club last night at the Royal College of Surgeons in England, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Major-General Sir Desmond Rice, the Regiment's first Commanding Officer, was present.

Memorial service

Lord Swaythling
A memorial service will be held for Lord Swaythling at 5.00pm on Thursday, September 17, 1998, at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, 28 St John's Wood Road, London NW8.



The new Bishop of Southwark, the Right Rev Tom Butler, left, meets the Bishop of London, the Right Rev Richard Chartres, on London Bridge, where their dioceses meet. The enthronement ceremony for the new bishop takes place tomorrow

Saintry bones pass scientific tests

By NORMAN HAMMOND, ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

TO THE surprise of some scientists, but to the pleasure of the Roman Catholic Church, some of the reputed remains of St Chad, Saxon Bishop of Mercia in the 7th century, seem to be the real thing. Venerated at St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham for the past century and a half, at least three and perhaps five of the six human bones enshrined in the saint's reliquary come from the same individual, and he was alive at the right time.

A combination of carbon-dating, using minuscule samples of bone dated at the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit, and skeletal analysis was used to analyse the bones, which came to light in 1839 in a Staffordshire house. The box in which they lay was made for them in 1665 by

Jesuits. They had acquired the relics from the family who had cared for them since shortly after the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the destruction of all of England's venerated shrines.

St Chad's bones had a picturesque existence even before the Reformation: after his death on March 2, AD 672, having been Bishop of the East Saxons and then the Mercians in the Midlands, he was buried at Lichfield. In AD 700, however, his remains were transferred to a new church there, according to the Venerable Bede, an early instance of such a move.

His cult burgeoned, and some of the bones were put into portable shrines for maximum availability to the faithful: by 1176, Lichfield Cathedral's endowments in-

cluded six shillings rent to keep a light burning at Chad's shrine, and by 1335 his relics included the head in a painted wooden box, one arm in a reliquary, some bones in a portable shrine and the remains in the main shrine. On feast days the skull would be displayed to pilgrims.

Both it and the arm have vanished, and most of the rest were dispersed under Henry VIII. The surviving bones, Angela Boyle reports in *Church Archaeology*, include a right femur, two left femora, one right tibia and two left tibiae.

Carbon-dating showed that the right femur, one of the left ones and the right tibia were identical in age and could have come from the same person. The other left femur and at least one of the left

tibiae must have come from somebody else. "At least two and possibly five individuals are represented: each of them belonged to an individual who lived in the 7th century," Ms Boyle says, although the sixth bone is dated too late.

"The likelihood of a group of bones of identical date coming together at a later date is slim," she says, indicating that the reputed bones of St Chad have probably been together for centuries. The "extra" bones could have come mixed with those of the saint in the ground or during disinterment. In any case, the reputed relics of saints, so often dismissed as frauds on the pious, are clearly worthy of more rigorous scholarly investigation. □ Source: *Church Archaeology* 2: 35-38.

Legal appointments

Sir Nicholas Phillips has been appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary from January 12 replacing Lord Lloyd of Berwick who is retiring on December 31.

Mr Justice Tuckey and Mr Justice Clarke have been appointed Lord Justices of Appeal from October 1. They will replace Lord Justice Hobhouse and Lord Justice Millett, who will be appointed Lords of Appeal in Ordinary from October 1.

Mr Justice Laws and Mr Justice Sedley have been appointed Lords of Appeal from January 12. They will replace Lord Justice Hutton, who is retiring on January 1, and Lord Justice Phillips, who will be appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary from January 12.

West Glamorgan Lieutenant

The following have been appointed Deputy Lieutenants of the County of West Glamorgan:

Mrs Ann Marilyn Harris, of the Lieutenant-Commander Bruce Charles Bagley, of Swansea; Colonel Martin Geoffrey Coulson, of Swansea; Captain Brian John Thorne, of Swansea.

Church news

Church of the Holy Spirit, Spain (Europe): to be Chaplain, Helsinki St Nicholas, Finland (same diocese).

The Rev Linda Munt, Curate, Beverley St Michael (York): to be Chaplain, East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust.

The Rev Vivien Elphick, Priest-in-Charge, Burlington St Edmund W. Lingwood, Strumpshaw W. Hastingsham and Buckenham (Norwich): to be also Rural Dean of Blifield (same diocese).

The Rev Canon Samir Habib, Rector, Hines St Philip, Georgia (ECUSA): to be Priest-in-Charge, Louisiana Christ Church, Switzerland (Europe).

The Rev Tim Herbert, Priest-in-Charge, Thame, Oxford, and Director of Ordinands (Canterbury): to be also Rural Dean of Dordrecht in Holland (same diocese).

The Rev Vaughan Roberts, Student Chaplain, Oxford St Ebbs (Oxford): to be Rector, same diocese.

The Rev Janet Russell, Curate, Icknield (Oxford): to be Team Vicar, Wallingford with special responsibility for Crowham Gifford (same diocese).

The Rev George Simpson, NSM, Littlemore St Mary the Virgin and St Nicholas (Oxford): to be part-time Assistant Curate, Oxford St Giles, St Philip and St James and St Margaret (same diocese).

Latest wills

David John Joseph Bryars, of Great Glen, Leicester, left estate valued at £6,493,963 net.

Sir Colin Goad, Director of International Registries since 1980, of Arnprior, Cruxis, Gloucestershire, left estate valued at £706,992 net. He left his estate mostly to relatives.

Lady Wallinger, of London SW6, left estate valued at £519,794 net.

The Right Rev Monsignor Alfred Newman, of London SW6, left estate valued at £1,270,628 net.

He left shares in his residuary estate to St Mary's Roman Catholic Diocese, Oxford and Cambridge Catholic Diocese, London Diocese, Oxford and Cambridge Diocese, and the Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth, London NW1.

Sir Reay Geddes, deputy chairman Midland Bank 1978-84, director 1987-94, of London SW1, left estate valued at £1,050,013 net.

Lord Dainton, Chancellor, Sheffield University since 1978, left estate valued at £121,278 net.

Reception

Lord Mayor of Westminster
The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Westminster were the hosts at a reception held yesterday at City Hall for London Borough Mayors and Members of the Executive Committee of the London Mayors' Association.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr A. de la Touche and Miss M. Lawton
The engagement is announced between Adrian, son of Mrs Pamela Hughes, of Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, and Margaret, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Lawton, of Teddington, Middlesex.

Mr K. Larsen and Miss E.C. Chance
The engagement is announced between Kenneth, son of Mr and Mrs Olein Larsen, of Bergen, Norway, and Fiona, daughter of Mr and Mrs Martin Chance, of Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex.

Mr A.J. Lumsden and Miss B.A. Pineda
The engagement is announced between Jim, elder son of Mr and Mrs John B. Lumsden, of Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne, and Angie, daughter of Mr and Mrs José Luis Pineda Fresno, of Mexico City. The marriage will take place in November in Mexico.

Captain D.M. Maxwell and Miss R. Brown
The engagement is announced between David, son of Colonel and Mrs Max Maxwell, of Heytesbury, Wiltshire, and Rachel, daughter of Mr and Mrs Roger Brown, of Brixton, Cleveland.

Mr C. Smith and Miss N. Bond
The engagement is announced between Christopher, son of Mr and Mrs L. Smith, of Hampton, Middlesex, and Nicola, daughter of Mr and Mrs J. Bond, of Lower Kingswood, Surrey.

Dr R. Sullivan and Miss S. Turbuck
The engagement is announced between Richard, only son of Mrs A. Sullivan, of Hartley Wintney, Hampshire, and Samantha, daughter of Mr and Mrs D. Turbuck, of New Milton, Hampshire.

Mr J.W.K. Taylor and Miss A.M. Beedley
The engagement is announced between Jeremy William Kirwan, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Max Taylor, of Notting Hill, London, and Amabelle Melissa, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Buckley, of Hampstead Norreys, Berkshire.

Mr J.E. Williamson and Miss A. Zimble
The engagement is announced between Jonathan Exley Williamson, of North Yorkshire, and Alexa Zimble, of London.

Mr M.J.H. Willis and Miss J.A. Dixon
The engagement is announced between Michael, elder son of Captain and Mrs Frederick Willis, of Antons' Hill, Coldstream, Berwickshire, and Juliet, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Andrew Dixon, of Wolverton Farm, Hampshire.

Mr R.C. Wyatt and Miss L.C. Ewing
The engagement is announced between Robert, son of Mr and Mrs Ronald Wyatt, of Solihull, West Midlands, and Lucy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Ewing, of Burgess Hill, West Sussex.

Marriages

Mr C.F. Lawton-Smith and Miss K.E.F. Heslop
The marriage took place on Saturday, September 5, in Lincoln's Inn Chapel, London, of Mr Christopher Lawton-Smith and Miss K.E.F. Heslop. Canon William Norman officiated.

The bride was attended by Miss Andrea O'Reilly and Miss Rachel Heslop. Mr Dominic Lawton-Smith was best man.

A reception was held at the Hyde Park Hotel, London, and the honeymoon is being spent abroad.

Mr J.R.S. Page and Miss J.R. Proctor
The marriage took place on Saturday, August 29, at St Leonard's, Swinstead, Leicestershire, of Mr Jason Page, only son of Mr and Mrs Adam Page, of Swinstead Hall, Leicestershire, to Miss Justine Proctor, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Julian Proctor, of Carole House, near Sutton, Lincolnshire. Canon Anne Horton officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Mrs Jeremy Jeffs, Miss Elinor Poyner and Miss Vanessa Proctor. Mr Peter Lefol was best man.

A reception was held at the home of the bridegroom and the honeymoon is being spent in Indonesia.

Goldsmiths College

Honorary Fellowships will be conferred upon Professor Kenneth Gregory and Mr Antony Gormley at the graduation ceremony for students at Goldsmiths College, University of London, today.

School news

Caterham School
The Autumn Term began on September 9, and ends on Friday, December 11. Head Boy is William Pine. Head Girl is Kate Fisher. Captain of Lacrosse is Susie Towsey. Captain of Rugby is James Laval. Open Morning will be held on Saturdays, October 17 and November 7. Sixth Form Open Evening will be held on Thursday, November 19. OC Day will be on Sunday, November 8, when there will be a reunion lunch for all 1940s leavers. Contact the school for further information. The Drama production *End of the Road* will be performed on December 8, 9 and 10 and the school Carol Service will be held on Sunday, December 6.

Haileybury & Imperial Service College
Christmas Term at Haileybury began on September 8. The Head of School is C.J. Crauford (Ty). The Second Head of School is Victoria Sexton (Aly). The Senior College Prefect is R.J.E. Walker (Ty). A.S.G. Mann (H) is Captain of Rugby. On September 12 at 11.30am there is a Celebration to mark the admission of younger girls and the 25th Anniversary of the first entry of Sixth Form girls. The Eleventh Annual Memorial Lecture will be given by the Right Hon Michael Portillo on Monday, November 16 at 5.30pm. The Carol Services are on December 6 and 11. Open Days for both boys and girls will be held on September 26, October 10, October 17, November

7, November 28, details of which, together with information on entry and Scholarships, are available from The Registrar, Haileybury, Hertford, SG13 7NU (0452 463353) (e-mail address: nick@haileybury.herts.sch.uk). Term ends on December 12.

Moreton Hall, Shropshire
Moreton Hall's term began on Sunday, September 6 and ends on Friday, December 11. The Carol Service will be held on Friday, December 11 at 11am. Half-term will be from Friday, October 23 to Sunday, November 1. There will be a lower school production of *A Christmas Carol* on Saturday, December 5 and Sunday, December 6, in the Musgrave Centre. The Head Prefect is Anna Wilson, her deputies are Abigail Goddard and Sarah Scarratt. The Captain of Lacrosse is Abigail Goddard. The Old Moretonians Association (5th Anniversary) Reunion will take place on Saturday, September 19, in the school. All Old Moretonians and partners are invited to attend. Please telephone the school for further information (01691 773671).

Queen Anne's School, Caversham
Term started on Wednesday, September 9, and finishes with the Carol Services on Thursday, December 10. Open Day on Saturday, September 19. All Old Girls and friends of the school are welcome at the Senior School Play *The Nose* on November 27 and 28. Please apply to the school for tickets.

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

BIRTHS

WHITROW - On September 4th 1998 to Carolyn (nee Mackintosh) and Tim, a son, Adam Timothy Mackintosh.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

BEN-HAIM - On September 7th at The Portland Chapel to Salome and Avni, a son, Yonathan Abraham, a brother for Noah.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

HARLAND-HOWSE - Guy and Veronica, 11th September 1948 - 1998.

OWNERS

KENNEDY - On September 9th 1998, to Rachael (nee French-Greendale) and Simon, a son, Angus Patrick Maxwell, a brother for Charlotte.

DEATHS

PHILPOT - On 27th August 1998 to Lisa (nee Valpy) and Russell, twin sons, Scott and Joseph.

BIRTHS

ALLEN - On Tuesday September 1st to Jane and Neil, a daughter, Mollie Rose, a sister to Rebecca and Lauren.

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OBITUARIES

VERNON HALL

Vernon Hall, CVO, anaesthetist, King's College Hospital, London, 1931-99, died on August 19 aged 93. He was born on August 25, 1904.

Known universally from his student days as Sam, after the rather macabre music-hall song *Sam Hall*, Vernon Hall was a pioneer in the rapidly changing science of anaesthesia and a doyen of medical education throughout his career. His 38 years at King's College Hospital saw advances from the use of (sometimes unsatisfactory) ether and (often potentially dangerous) chloform anaesthetics, delivered through an open gauze mask, to methods of infinitely greater sophistication.

The 1950s ushered in the introduction of much safer gases such as trifluoroethane, while pentothal, administered intravenously, enabled patients to be anaesthetised rapidly before the gases were introduced into the process. The gains in the safety to the patient of being put under general anaesthesia were enormous.

Born in New Cross, South London, of parents who were both teachers, Vernon Hall was educated at Haberdashers' Aske's School. Uncertain what choice of career to make, he was guided towards medicine by his headmaster, and went on to study at King's College London and then King's College Hospital Medical School, qualifying in 1927. He was a keen sportsman and was full back in the most successful rugby team that the hospital ever had.

After qualifying he undertook some locum work in general practice, also picking up a part-time casualty officer post at King's. His first full-time appointment was as house surgeon to Sir Lenthal Cheate, a celebrated breast surgeon of the day. This job included the gruesome task of carrying often poorly wrapped surgical specimens to the hospital laboratory from outlying hospitals by bus - few young doctors had cars in those days.

Hall soon began to take an interest in teaching and also in anaesthetics, and was appointed junior house anaesthetist to King's College Hospital in 1928. In 1931, at the age of 27, he was appointed consultant anaesthetist to the hospital. This was a post



Hall: a career which saw great advances in the safety of anaesthesia

with no salary and income had to be earned from private cases done at the invitation of the surgeon, and from locums outside the hospital. Later Hall obtained a consultant post at South-east Hospital with a salary of £150 per annum for two sessions a week. Most anaesthetists were given by general practitioners in those days and specialist anaesthetists were rather rare birds.

When the war began he worked initially at King's during the Blitz, and then joined the RAMC, in which his first posting was to go by Catalina flying boat to Addu Atoll, the southernmost island in the Maldives, to pick up a sick anaesthetist, a trip which entailed eighteen hours in the air as, en route, the flying boat also had the task of circling a merchant

ship to protect it from submarines.

He was then sent on an even longer journey to a small tented hospital in a jungle training area near Jhansi, in northern India. This was a hazardous posting, not because of any Japanese threat, but from the presence for training purposes of a number of tri-ger-happy Americans, veterans of the Guadalcanal campaign. Not having an enemy to fight, these troops were in the habit of looting off at anything that moved, avian or terrestrial, and stray rounds were frequently whistling round the training area both by day and by night. When the Americans started taking potshots at hornets' nests, as they were apt to, the medical man was liable to find himself with his hands full.

Shortly afterwards, Hall was appointed anaesthetic adviser to Eastern Command based in Calcutta. This post involved regular visits to the forward areas in northeast India and Burma, such as Shillong, Kohima, Imphal and Chingong, where the main Japanese thrusts had just been stemmed in the early part of 1944. Hall was then made anaesthetic adviser to Allied Forces South-East Asia, covering not only Burma but also Malaya, Java, Indonesia, Sumatra and adjacent areas.

Later in 1944 he was promoted to brigadier and made anaesthetic adviser to South-East Asia Command, taking control of anaesthetic postings in India as well as throughout South-East Asia. Keeping in contact with all parts of this vast domain was extremely difficult, and involved long, tiring journeys.

After the war Hall returned to his consultant post at King's, and in 1948 obtained his fellowship of the newly established Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal College of Surgeons and became a founder member of its board. He also took an increasing interest in medical student education, being Vice-Dean of King's College Hospital Medical School, 1949-51, and then Dean from 1951 to 1965. He was chairman of the Board of Advanced Medical Studies and a member of the Senate of London University from 1952 to 1962. He quickly became a witty and accomplished after-dinner speaker.

During his career he worked with many of the leading surgeons and ob-

stetricians of his day, and was present at the births of all four royal children, working initially with Sir William Gilliat and later with Sir John Peel. He also attended Princess Margaret and the Duchess of Kent and in 1960 he retired to north Devon where he was able to pursue his interests of walking, riding, reading and music. With the help of his wife he did much to inspire the building of the village hall at Brendon, near Lynton, and was an active member and later a vice-president of the Exmoor Society. Even after moving back to Kent, ten years ago, he continued into his nineties to travel to Devon to attend the AGM of the society.

His interest in the countryside and walking also took him many times to the famous mountaineers' inn at Pen-y-Gwryd in North Wales. In 1982 he published *A Scrapbook of Snowdonia*, a history of the inn and the surrounding area. His other publications included *A History of King's College Hospital Dental School* (1973) and, jointly with others, *The Story of King's College Hospital and its Medical School* (1991).

More recently he wrote his largely autobiographical *Reminiscences*, published last year. In this book he reflected upon changes in anaesthesia and healthcare during his working life and upon the difficulties in integrating a medical vocation with market-place economics. This was a subject upon which he felt strongly and spoke with great clarity on his 90th birthday.

He was particularly opposed to the view that doctors could give of their best while working to a strict timetable, or that an operating theatre should close for some logistical reason before a list was finished.

Described by *Paris Match* on one occasion as "a typical Englishman of the strong silent type", he had beneath his quiet exterior a vein of great human kindness and generosity. He was a disciplined man who liked punctuality, especially in respect of his meals, and continued to dress daily in a suit and tie until the day of his death.

His wife Marcia, a paediatrician whom he met in their student days at King's, survives him with their son and two daughters.

MARGARET POTTER

Margaret Potter, romantic novelist, died in Oxford on August 26 aged 72. She was born in Harrow on June 21, 1926.

FEW established novelists could match Margaret Potter's range of published work. Writing as Anne Melville, Margaret Newman and Anne Bettridge, as well as under her own name, she produced more than fifty novels in a variety of genres, and countless short stories for collections and magazines. She traced her remarkable storytelling ability to an early stay in hospital, aged five, when she was unable to sleep and devised picture stories in her head to stave off nightmares. "I still lie awake, creating characters and making up adventures for them to enjoy or to endure," she wrote in 1994.

Margaret Newman was the eldest daughter of Bernard Newman, a civil servant, lecturer and traveller, and himself the writer of more than a hundred books, including spy stories and travel guides. She won a scholarship to St Hugh's College, Oxford, where she first learnt the value of the meticulous research which would be a trademark of her historical novels. On graduation she taught in Egypt and edited a magazine while waiting for her husband-to-be, Jeremy, to finish his own studies and find work.

Members of the Hampstead Choral Society, of which she was then secretary, would have recognised characters in her first published novel, *Murder to Music* (1959). This was followed by a series of novels published by Harcourt and Blacket, one of which brought her the Romantic Novelists' Award. She then found time for nine children's books while, from the mid-1970s, her considerable energy was devoted

to family sagas. The six volumes of the Lorimer saga (beginning with *The Lorimer Line*) first attracted a large readership to her work, her readers' loyalty thereafter evidenced by the considerable sums she received from having her books borrowed from public libraries under the relatively recent Public Lending Right.

In these sagas, as well as in her 1990s novels such as *A Clean Break* and *Standing Alone*, the interest in the lead female characters does not lie



in their love life or their marriage but in their independence and determination to make what they can of challenges and opportunities.

Margaret Potter herself was full of such spirit. When she was not writing, she gardened with enthusiasm, she sang until she felt her voice had faded, she played tennis weekly and she did voluntary work. Her husband Jeremy - magazine publisher, sportsman and author - died in November last year; they were married for 47 years. She leaves a daughter and a son.

Her last book, *Debutante Daughters* by Anne Melville, will be published next year by Orion.

VERONICA CRABBIE

Veronica Crabbie, CBE, voluntary worker and campaigner, died on August 17 aged 87. She was born on November 26, 1910.

VERONICA CRABBIE was Scottish chairman of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service and a commandant in the British Red Cross, but she will be best remembered as a pioneering campaigner for better support for single mothers.

The youngest daughter of the judge, church reformer and author Lord Sands, Margaret Veronica Johnston attended St Denis School in Edinburgh and then boarded at Queen Margaret's School, York, where she was head girl.

She then took the "Housewife's Course" at Athol Crescent, Edinburgh, and went on to chauffeur her father and provide secretarial support. An ardent love of camping, fostered by her years in the Girl Guides, led her to become a trainer and assistant to blind Guides. She retired from guiding on her marriage to the Edinburgh stockbroker, Pat Crabbie, in 1938.

She worked as a Red Cross VAD (naval), and later re-

called the strict discipline at the Royal Naval Hospital, Chatham.

On moving on to the RN Hospital, Haslar, near Portsmouth, she found the hands-on approach more rewarding. She retired from the Red Cross in 1942 on the birth of her second child, by which time she was a commandant.

Veronica Crabbie joined the committee of the Edinburgh Home for Mothers and Infants at Claremont Park in 1947, a natural progression from her voluntary work at the Children's Shelter in the city's Meadows, which she had begun when aged 20.

She was also a member of the Edinburgh Children's Welfare Group. She was appointed chairman of the Claremont Park committee in 1952, and remained in the post for 14 years until she took the chair of the Scottish Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child, now the Scottish Council for Single Parents.

In 1953 she had been a founder member of the Edinburgh Children's Home Organisation, which represented several voluntary homes in the city. On joining the Women's Royal Voluntary Service in 1960 she

was appointed children's welfare officer for southeast Scotland, and later she took over the same post at Scottish headquarters.

She became Scottish vice-chairman in 1966, before being elected to the chair in 1972. She retired in 1977.

Following her 50 years and more of voluntary service, she embarked on an Open University degree, having always felt cheated out of the chance of higher education when she was younger.

She graduated in 1982 at the age of 72. Her tutor was the SNP leader and MEP for North-East Scotland, Allan Macartney, who was a distant relative and who died last month.

She and her husband were avid curlers, and she was past president of Edinburgh Ladies Curling Club.

She was appointed CBE in 1976, but felt some regret that the citation mentioned only her WRVS work: she felt that her work with the Scottish Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child had been more important.

Veronica Crabbie is survived by her husband and their daughter and two sons.

Charlie Feathers, rock'n'roll singer, died in Memphis, Tennessee, on August 29 aged 66. He was born on June 12, 1932.

CHARLIE FEATHERS was present at the birth of rock'n'roll. He co-wrote Elvis Presley's first hit, *I Forgot To Remember To Forget* and, although his own commercial success was limited, over the years he grew into something approaching a legend as new generations rediscovered the early rockabilly music of which he was a pioneer and lionised anyone who had shared a studio with the original rock'n'roll heroes. As a result, his influence was far greater than his own record sales would suggest, and his popularity seemed to undergo at least one revival per decade throughout a long and varied career.

Raised on a tenanted farm near Holly Springs, Mississippi, as a boy Feathers sang in church and listened to country music on the *Grand Ole Opry* radio show. He heard bluegrass performers such as Bill Monroe when they passed through nearby Hudsonville and was taught to play the gui-

tar by a black sharecropper named Junior Kimbrough. In 1948 he left home to work with his father on an oil pipeline in Texas, playing his guitar by night in local saloons in a basic country style.

He married at 18 and moved to Memphis in the early 1950s, working variously as a truck driver and factory hand. Yet he spent as much time as he could hanging out at Sam Phillips' Sun Studios, where he got to know such blues musicians as Howlin' Wolf as well as the teenage hopefuls Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash and Jerry Lee Lewis.

The exact nature of Feathers' contribution to the emergence of the rockabilly sound which became Sun's trademark is disputed. Certainly, his background in country music and his acquaintance with black music meant he was perfectly positioned musically, but extravagant claims he made over the years to have arranged all of Elvis Presley's material, and to have given Lewis the idea for his pumping piano style, need to be taken with a pinch of salt. His early demo of *I Forgot To Remember To Forget* was his only record on Sun under his own name, a country number called *Defrost Your Heart*, was released in 1955 some months after Presley's debut.

Sun rejected Feathers's next song, *Tongue Tied*, and he took it instead to the Meteor label, enjoying a local hit. It was to remain his best-known number. He next moved to King Records in Cincinnati, who attempted to sell him as their answer to Presley, but before long he was back working with Phillips cutting demos and doing studio work. He continued to make records for a number of small labels throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s with his country voice, novelty vocal effects and



Charlie Feathers (with guitar) and members of his 1950s group, the Musical Warriors

a rockabilly sound that veered towards light comedy, but without ever hitting the big time.

Yet, despite such an apparently limited set of achievements, the Feathers cult grew, partly because of the association with such giants as Presley, Perkins and Lewis. He recorded an album for the Barlabel in 1963 that introduced him to a new set of fans who were still in nappies when Sun Studios had been making musical history.

In 1977 a single on the Rollin Rock label, *That Certain Smile*, backed with *She Set Me Free*, was seized upon by

British rockabilly revivalists such as Dave Edmunds, and Feathers briefly enjoyed perhaps the most popular spell of his career. Although he was never one who could be accused of false modesty, even Feathers must have been mildly surprised to find himself headlining a show at London's Rainbow Theatre and recording for EMI's progressive rock label, Harvest.

A compilation album, *Rockabilly Mainman*, in 1978 helped to perpetuate the legend. Ten years later a similar collection entitled *The Living Legend* signalled yet another revival of interest. The 1991 al-

bum *Charlie Feathers* included a reworking of his classic *I Forgot To Remember To Forget* and in 1995 the appearance of an album of previously unreleased 1950s demos, under the title *Tip Top Daddy*, created yet another mini-revival which led to a lavish and definitive double CD retrospective, *Get With It*, released only six weeks ago.

He continued working almost until the end, playing rock'n'roll classics in a band which included his son Bubba and daughter Wanda. He is survived by his wife Rosemary, and by two sons and a daughter.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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LAUNCH OF ROYAL OAK

The Royal Oak was yesterday launched in the presence of a vast concourse of spectators. Her propelling power will consist of a pair of 1,000-horse power (nominal) engines, by Messrs. Maudslayi, Son, and Field. Already three tiers of armour plates have been bolted on to her port and starboard sides, but three additional rows will be given her, thus carrying the plates from her gunwale to a distance of 5ft below her load water line. Each plate is 4 inches in thickness, and weighs, on an average, 80cwt. These will cover the vessel to within about 40ft of her stern and stern, when they will commence tapering off to 3 inches in thickness at the stern and bows, excepting under the buttock, where the plates will only be 2 inches thick.

ON THIS DAY

September 11, 1862

The launch of *Warrior*, Britain's first iron-clad warship in 1860, began a programme of naval expansion. *Royal Oak* was one of six iron-clads constructed in the 1860s.

covered with 58thrs inch iron, and in the other parts, and the whole firmly riveted and bolted together, and covered with the ordinary planking secured to the iron beams by nuts and screws. She will carry her entire armament, with the exception of a 100-pounder Armstrong at her stern and stern, on her main deck, the portholes being unusually small, their height being 3ft 10ins. and width 2ft. Her embrasures, however, are so formed that the guns will have a view of 32deg in each direction, thus working in a radius of 64 deg. The main and lower decks will be ventilated on an improved system, the invention of

Captain Fanshawe, Superintendent of Chatham dockyard. It is intended to sheath the bottom of the *Royal Oak* with a new description of metal, or rather combination of metals, according to the plan proposed by M. Mole, chief officer of the metal mills at Chatham dockyard.

The launch was appointed to take place at a quarter before 2 o'clock, by which hour Miss Fanshawe, the daughter of Captain Fanshawe, having been conducted to the bows of the ship, the stem of which was ornamented with a large bough of oak, dashed the bottle of wine against her bows, and immediately after severed the silken cord which held the last logshore. Contrary to general expectation, however, the *Royal Oak*, like the *Mersey*, the last vessel built on the same slip, obstinately refused to move.

This arose, probably, from too many blocks having been left under her, the calculation being that her enormous weight would render this precaution necessary. About a quarter of an hour, therefore, was spent in removing the extra blocks; after which three powerful hydraulic presses, one of which was placed under her forefoot, and the others at each of her bilgeways, were brought into requisition; and at 2 o'clock the huge vessel glided easily down the launching-ways into the harbour, amid the cheers of the spectators, the band playing "Rule Britannia."

Wassail la

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1998

Fears of meltdown prompt 2000 summit

By Chris Ayres

DON CRUICKSHANK, chairman of the Government's Action 2000 group, has met senior Home Office officials to discuss what to do if Britain's private and public infrastructure goes into meltdown because of the millennium bug.

The former head of Ofel, the telecoms watchdog, revealed that the Government had been preparing for a worst-case scenario after a meeting yesterday with business leaders, regulators and civil servants. It is thought that senior representatives from British Telecom, Cable & Wireless, Transco and Shell attended.

The Government also published a report by Ernst & Young yesterday. The report examined to what extent industries are dependent on each other and how a complete computer breakdown could affect Britain.

Mr Cruickshank said that he could still not give an assurance that Britain's businesses and public organisations would be able to provide "normal services" after January 1, 2000.

He added, however, that he was satisfied with the progress most organisations were making towards tackling the problem.

Mr Cruickshank said that one of the biggest problems Action 2000 faced was persuading businesses to share information with each other about the millennium bug. Disclosure is also vital between British and foreign companies, he said. He added that regulators could take away licences from companies if they failed to make adequate preparations for dealing with the millennium bug.

Commentary, page 29



Special agents: from left, Stuart Higgins, media consultant, Robert Gutowski, chief executive, and Jon Holmes, managing director, of Marquee UK

Stephens sells star stable to Marquee for £2.1m

By Jason Nisse

TONY STEPHENS, the agent who represents three of the biggest names in British football — Alan Shearer, Michael Owen and David Beckham — yesterday sold his business to The Marquee Group, the US sports management company whose clients include Gary Lineker, Greg Rusedski and Will Carling.

The deal, worth \$3.5 million (£2.1 million), will create one of the most powerful sports management companies in Europe, bringing together Mr Stephens, Jon Holmes, who sold his Park Associates business to Marquee earlier this year, and Donald Dell, the former US Davis Cup captain, one of the founders of the professional tennis circuit.

Marquee has also signed up Stuart Higgins, who recently stepped down as editor of *The Sun*, as media consultant. Marquee is also in the midst of a \$100 million merger with SFX Entertainment, a company that owns a series of sports and entertainment events in the US as well as representing Michael Jordan, the basketball star who is the world's highest-paid sportsman.

The deal follows the acquisition earlier this year of APA, the sports management group founded by Alan Pascoe, the former Olympic sprinter, by Interpublic, the US marketing services giant. It makes Marquee one of the world's three largest sports management groups along with Mark McCormack's IMG and Octagon, the Interpublic business.

Mr Holmes said that as the business of sport becomes more sophisticated and affluent, so agents had to become more professional and shed their image of being dodgy dealers driving sports cars and waving mobile phones. "We are almost acquiring an aura of respectability," he said.

Commentary, page 29

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	5136.6	(-174.7)
Yield	3.21%	
FTSE All Share	2255.67	(-68.93)
Nikkei	14856.03	(-99.51)
New York	7847.20	(-217.82)*
Dow Jones	852.99	(-23.21)*
S&P Composite		
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long bond	10 1/4%	(10 3/4%)
Yield	5.22%	(5.27%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-mth interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Life long gilt		
future (Dec)	113.05	(112.79)
STERLING		
New York		
\$ sterling	1.6823*	(1.6890)
London		
\$ sterling	1.6812	(1.6834)
DM	2.8444	(2.8650)
FF	1.3603	(1.3610)
SFR	2.3367	(2.3541)
Yen	225.69	(228.03)
E index	102.9	(103.5)
DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.6823*	(1.7195)
FF	3.6590*	(3.7690)
SFR	1.3603	(1.4110)
Yen	134.25*	(135.70)
\$ index	108.5	(111.2)
Tokyo close Yen	135.68	
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent15-day(Nov)	913.65	(913.10)
GOLD		
London close	3280.75	(3284.75)

MPC sends signal on interest rate stability

By Janet Bush
ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee yesterday defied growing pressure from industry to cut base rates but provided the assurance long sought by exporters that it will not raise them again.

The MPC, announcing that it had left base rates unchanged at 7.5 per cent, clearly felt sufficiently sensitive to growing fears that Britain will be dragged down by turbulence in the world economy to publish a statement. This is the first time it has elucidated on a no-change decision since it was set up 16 months ago.

It said: "Although the Committee judges that the current level of interest rates is necessary to meet the inflation target, it recognises that the deterioration in the international economy could increase the risk of inflation falling below the target. The Committee will continue to monitor these risks."

The markets interpreted this as a strong signal that rates have peaked. In the British Government bond market the yield on benchmark ten-year bonds fell to 5.22 per cent, the lowest level seen since the 1960s. The pound slid to its weakest level against the mark for more than ten months on the conviction that base rates

are heading lower. It was quoted as low as DM2.8380 from earlier highs above DM2.86.

Far from drawing comfort from the hint of lower rates at some stage, the stock market was disappointed that there was no cut yesterday. The FTSE 100 index closed 174.7 points lower at 5136.6, a slump of more than 3 per cent.

The City was caught in a vicious cross wind from Wall Street where share prices plunged by 2 per cent in early trading on fears of an end to the Clinton presidency.

The Dow Jones industrial average was down 271 points in mid-session, further affected by news of America's largest-ever current account deficit

in the second quarter, a \$56.5 billion gap.

Manufacturers rounded on the MPC yesterday for not cutting rates on a day when the Confederation of British Industry's latest distributive trades survey showed that confidence in the business environment had plunged to its lowest level since the recessionary conditions of November 1992.

Kane Barker, chief economic adviser at the CBI, said: "A rate cut is urgently needed in view of the depressed outlook for the UK economy over the next 18 months — the international uncertainties should not have been a reason to hesitate."

She added: "The latest evidence on inflation has gener-

ally supported the view that the upward risk to inflation is subsiding, whereas the downward risk to growth is becoming more serious."

The survey showed growth in retail sales volumes in August was at a virtual standstill for the first time since September 1995. Average selling prices slowed considerably to show the weakest rate of growth since February 1995.

Geoffrey Dicks, UK economist at Greenwich NatWest, said: "The zip has gone out of the high street. If there was any justice in this world, rates [would have been] cut on the back of this survey."

Commentary, page 29

British Gas sets sights on 3.5m power customers

By Christine Buckley, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH GAS is aiming to sell electricity to more than 3.5 million customers after claiming that nearly two million people have already registered an interest in buying its power.

Next week it will launch an advertising blitz and is set to announce selling partnerships with several businesses.

Roy Gardner, chief executive, said 440,000 people had signed up to buy electricity from British Gas while a further 1.5 million said they wanted information.

Competition in household electricity begins on Monday although at first it will apply to only 750,000 people. British Gas estimates it will spend up to £40 a head for each electricity customer it gains through an advertising campaign and investment in its systems.

The company has held talks with National Power and PowerGen about buying power stations so that it can produce the

electricity it sells. The generators are soon to be forced to sell some capacity.

Mr Gardner set out his ambitions for selling electricity as Centrica, British Gas's holding company, recorded its first pre-tax profit and gave a strong signal that a dividend payment is likely next year.

The company made £90 million pre-tax profits for the six months to June 30 compared with a loss of £149 million for the same period in 1997. The turnaround came despite losing £59 million because of unusually mild weather earlier this year. Earnings per share were 1.2p compared with a 4.9p loss last year.

BCG, the gas pipeline business, is to be forced to sell its storage facilities. It has bowed to pressure from the regulator for a gradual sale of its capacity to competitors.

Tempus, page 30

BTR warns of further factory closures

By Adam Jones

BTR shares slumped 18 per cent yesterday after half-year profits fell under pressure from the strong pound and weak markets in South America and South-East Asia.

The poor performance, which continues a prolonged decline in the former conglomerate's share price, prompted BTR to say it may close more factories. It is also speeding up plans to move more jobs away from "high-cost" countries.

In the past 18 months, 11 factories have been closed in the automotive division, with production capacity moved from the US and Germany to Eastern Europe or Asia.

Ian Strachan, chief executive, also said the return of £500 million to shareholders will be brought forward from April 1999 to take advantage of the company's historically low share price, with immediate effect. This was not enough to stop analysts downgrading profits forecasts for the year.

BTR, which is now classed as an engineering company, re-

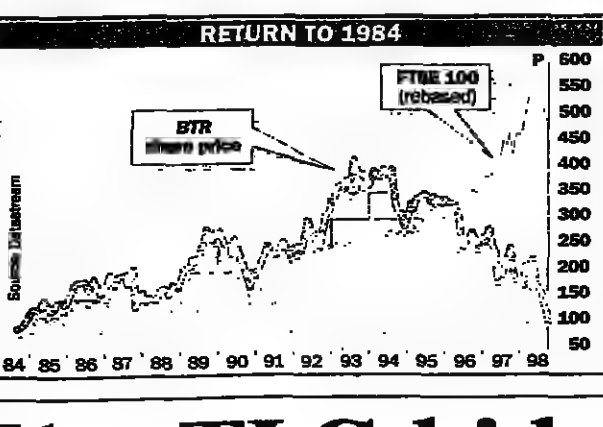
ported a pre-tax loss of £45 million, compared with a £516 million profit, but this latest figure includes a £407 million loss on disposals.

BTR's automotive, power drives and specialist engineering divisions all saw profits fall. The strength of sterling reduced the profits of the core engineering activities by £20 million, compared with the first half last year.

One analyst said BTR was enduring "the worst of all possible worlds". He said the company's new strategy of being prepared to sacrifice its traditionally high margins is failing to deliver organic sales growth in its key businesses. Another said that the weak figures were inevitable because of global market conditions.

The loss per share of 6.3p compares with earnings of 9.1p. The interim dividend is unchanged at 4p per share.

Tempus, page 30



TUC to debate criticism of PFI

By Christine Buckley

UNION leaders are squaring up to attack on the Government about the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) after John Monks, the TUC general secretary, failed to exclude a critical motion from next week's TUC conference.

The general council — the TUC's ruling body — overruled Mr Monks as he tried to stop a motion by the Association of Magisterial Officers. It calls for an end to the PFI and Private/Public Partnerships and for the Government to "re-instate proper capital funding to ensure the future infrastructure of the public services in a way which does not damage jobs and services."

Mr Monks said: "I recommended we oppose the motion but the general council decided to leave it up to Congress."

Some unions have urged an end to the involvement of private cash in public building. Mr Monks believes the union movement should take a more pragmatic approach to the PFI and accept that some private money is useful in government projects.

Meanwhile the TUC appealed to employees to assert their rights under the working time directive, which takes effect next month. The TUC said companies are pushing employees to opt out of new rules which will restrict the working week to 48 hours. If most people in a company which does not recognise unions opt out of the working time directive then all workers there will forfeit the right.

Wassall launches £351m TLG bid

By Paul Durman

WASSALL seized a 25.6 per cent stake in TLG yesterday as it unleashed a £351 million bid for the lighting company that last week recommended a £321 million offer from Cooper Industries of the US.

While Cooper considered how to respond, TLG effectively withdrew its recommendation by advising its shareholders to take no action pending clarification of Cooper's intentions. Wassall, a conglomerate turned investment company, is offering 175p a share, 15p more than its American rival.

Wassall spent an estimated £33 million adding to the 15 per cent stake it had built up in TLG since the start of last year. Cooper, which has varied electrical activities, has an 8.3 per cent holding. The shares ended 8p higher at 177 1/2p yesterday.

Some analysts believe that Wassall's bid is an attempt to encourage Cooper to raise its offer. Richard Dyett at

Henderson Crosthwaite said: "If Cooper comes back and pays 190p then Wassall will have got 30p more than it otherwise would have. I think it has got an each-way bet."

However, Chris Miller, Wassall's chief executive, insisted that it was a serious offer. "We want to own TLG at 175p," he said. The reason Wassall had not talked to TLG during the past two months — when the lighting group was known to be discussing a takeover — was that it wanted to keep its options

open, without being bound by any letters of confidentiality.

Although Wassall has cash of more than £300 million, it intends to finance the TLG purchase with borrowings of up to £150 million. It will consider bringing in other equity investors to take a stake in the acquired business.

Mr Miller said Wassall believed TLG could improve its performance: it had good market shares, well-known brand names and could support "a certain amount of debt."

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Booker spells out options

By FRASER NELSON

BOOKER, the struggling food producer in merger talks with Budgens, briefed the City on how it would cope with the future if it remained independent.

Jonathan Taylor, chairman, said that he has a short-list of candidates who could become chief executive immediately should the Budgens talks fall through.

He said: "If the Budgens deal does not go ahead, we will move very fast." He added that talks to sell its fish processing and Daehnfeld divisions are in "advanced stages" although the sale of its Scottish salmon farms is not imminent.

Some analysts thought Mr Taylor was preparing the ground for a break-down in the Budgens talks, which are expected to conclude next week. Booker shares dropped 11½p to a low of 140p and Budgens held at 70p.

One said: "There are few synergies in the Budgens deal — if they want a new chief executive they should pay John von Spreckelsen [the Budgens chief executive] £10 million and save themselves £100 million."

Michael Landymore, analyst at Henderson Crosthwaite, said that Booker's balance sheet — which detailed cash of £106 million and borrowings of £98 million — was not as bad as many had feared.

The company's underlying profit halved to £11.1 million (£22 million) for the 24 weeks to June 13 after an expected sharp drop in profits.

Headline earnings were halved to 3.3p (6.7p) and the interim dividend drops to 4.2p (8.3p).



Riding high: Hanson's Andrew Dougal, right, and Jonathan Nichols, finance director, are on the acquisition trail after impressive half-year profits

Cornerstone gives Hanson foundations for expansion

By ADAM JONES

HANSON, the construction materials group, issued an upbeat trading statement after Cornerstone, its US aggregates business, helped to swell half-year profits.

Andrew Dougal, chief executive, said Hanson can afford to spend between £700 million and £800 million on acquisitions without approaching shareholders for more funds. However he said this money would not be used for the kind of massive deal favoured by

Hanson when it was a conglomerate. Several potential bolt-on acquisitions worth up to \$100 million (£60 million) apiece, mainly in US aggregates and concrete, are being considered by Hanson management.

Interim profits before tax rose from £47.8 million last year to £78.8 million. Although Hanson was aided by a reduction in exceptional disposal charges, trading profits at Cornerstone rose 61 per cent to £40.6 million.

Mr Dougal said Cornerstone

will enjoy the benefits of the US Federal Government's latest road building plans over a period of six years. The transport infrastructure programme is 54 per cent larger than its predecessor.

Mr Dougal said that ARC, the UK concrete and aggregates group, will have a stronger second half. Trading profit was relatively flat in the first half, partly held back by wet UK weather. He also said that ARC should be able to increase prices next year.

Hanson said the UK Govern-

ment's recent road review "has, on balance, improved the outlook for this part of the business, but the timing of the benefit is uncertain".

Mr Dougal said he thought the UK market for new housing and home repairs should remain stable, protecting its brick-making division, which saw trading profits fall from £20.7 million to £18.1 million in the first half. He said: "We don't see [the market] falling away but we don't see it rising."

However, Hanson still faces a weak market in Belgium,

where clay block prices have been hit by widespread industry overcapacity.

During the six months, Hanson managed to rid itself of the liabilities arising from pollution in the US by signing a re-insurance deal. The cost of this will be taken in the second-half accounts.

Earnings per share before exceptional items rose from 12½p to 15.3p. An interim dividend of 4p per share, the same as last year, has been declared. The shares rose from 333p to 342p yesterday.

Mirror Group confident about cable TV profits

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

MIRROR Group forecast yesterday that it would start making a monthly operating profit on its National Live cable television service by the end of next year.

The publisher of the *Daily Mirror* also said it had signed programming deals with Heart of Midlothian, last year's Scottish Cup winners, with its City TV station in Edinburgh.

The group plans to change the format of its City TV stations away from local news coverage to more "upbeat" programming that advertisers are prepared to pay for.

The change of direction came as Mirror Group announced an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £49 million for the six months to July 5 before exceptional items.

Turnover rose by 2 per cent on a like-for-like basis and was up 31 per cent to £355 million when acquisitions such as Midland Independent Newspapers are included. Earnings per share rose by 3 per cent to 7.6p from 7.4p.

The share price fell by 8½p to 153½p on fears of pressure on advertising yields and circu-

lations and partly because of caution from Victor Blank, the new chairman, about advertising levels.

However, Mr Blank said: "In the face of economic uncertainty our core activities are relatively less exposed to downside risk."

The company hoped to research new formats for a re-launch of *The Sporting Life* later in the autumn.

Analysts now forecast pre-tax profits of between £100 million and £102 million for the full year.

Microsoft strikes back against 'gang of four'

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

MICROSOFT has launched a counterattack in its US and trust battle by claiming its rivals formed a "gang of four" to thwart its progress.

It alleges that IBM, Netscape, Sun Microsystems and Oracle conspired against it, using the same anti-competitive measures of which it is accused by the Justice Department. It has issued a subpoena on all communications between the four companies to the Justice Department.

Microsoft is accused of threatening and bullying rivals to maintain its dominant

market positions. It says its practices are common in the fast-expanding industry.

In a separate move, Oracle alleged yesterday that it lost a contract with Digital for 500,000 network computers after Bill Gates, the Microsoft chairman, put pressure on Robert Palmer, the Digital chairman, to drop the contract or lose its Microsoft work.

The anti-trust trial is scheduled to start on September 23 but the Microsoft subpoena could delay the proceedings.

A Microsoft spokesman said: "We intend to demonstrate that Microsoft competitors are doing everything the government accuses us of doing, and then some."

The company specifically mentioned plans by Netscape, a rival browser maker, to form an industry alliance with Apple and IBM to develop technology while excluding Microsoft from the group.

In the Justice Department suit, Microsoft is accused of threatening and bullying rivals to maintain its dominant

CBI chief calls for debate on EMU

By OUR BUSINESS STAFF

THE recent financial instability across the world has highlighted the need for serious debate on European Monetary Union, the Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry said last night.

Adair Turner said that Britain needed considered debate looking at the detailed economic arguments for and against a single currency.

Joining EMU could help address the biggest cause for concern in the global economy — over-reaction in the financial markets to crises such as those in Russia, he told the annual dinner of CBI Scotland.

"The debate about the euro has to be based on serious

analysis of the economic case for and against, a recognition that if going in carries some real risks, staying out will have serious disadvantages," he said.

Benefits of a single currency included a single European-wide capital market, transparent prices and reduced investment risks which could spur more intense competition and improved productivity.

Arguments against the euro, he said, included economic risks such as regional unemployment brought about by a single interest rate and the difficulties of getting the UK's economic cycle in line with those of Europe.

New spirit at Allied Domecq

ALLIED DOMEQ, the international drinks group, announced it was restructuring its spirits business in the USA.

It is to combine the sales, marketing and administrative functions of Hiram Walker and Domecq Importers into a new organisation to be called Allied Domecq Spirits, USA, based in Connecticut and led by Martin Jones, previously president of Domecq Importers.

George McCarthy, president of the Americas for Allied Domecq Spirits & Wine said: "This restructuring will allow a greater focus on our core brands, while also allowing us to better service our customers."

Nat Express in Australian bid

By FRASER NELSON

NATIONAL Express, Britain's largest train and coach operator, is to bid for five privatised bus, tram and rail networks in Melbourne, Australia.

Roger Salmon, the former UK rail franchising director, has helped Melbourne's authorities break the transport network into two commuter train companies, two tram companies and a long-distance railway. Each new company will own its own vehicles and infrastructure, and be run on a UK-style franchise basis.

Phil White, chief executive of National Express, said: "Any bidder can only win one train and one tram company, so we will try for them all."



On track: Phil White, left, and Colin Child, finance director

successful, the company would sub-contract any infrastructure work.

Mr White said the company is focusing its international expansion on Australia and the US — where it intends to buy

more airports after being named preferred bidder for Stewart airport 60 miles north of New York.

Shares of National Express defied the falling market to jump 58p to 939p as it returned

BUSINESS ROUND-UP

Laird Group slips 41% over first half

SHARES in Laird Group lost nearly 8 per cent yesterday after the engineer said that profits fell 41 per cent in the first-half of the year. Profits before tax fell to £20.5 million as Laird's sealing systems arm plunged into the red. The division, which made a loss of £3.1 million compared with profits of £9.4 million in the first half of 1997, was hit by higher-than-expected start-up costs at its American car body seal plant in North Carolina. Further costs were incurred on capacity increases in France and Spain, and Laird has also had problems keeping manufacturing costs down in Germany. Overall group sales actually rose 9 per cent to £548 million. Earnings per share fell from 18.2p to 10.8p. A dividend of 5.4p per share has been declared, unchanged from last year. The shares, which had been trading as high as 479p earlier this year, closed at 196½p. One analyst said: "It is a case of jam tomorrow. They said nothing at all that was optimistic. It looks like 1999 can be written off as well and it will be 2000 before we get any results. Their scrapping levels are far too high. It is quite a complicated engineering process to get a seal that fits. At the moment their scrapping rate is about 50 per cent compared with the normal level of 15 per cent."

Mitsubishi settles

THE American subsidiary of Mitsubishi, the Japanese car maker, has agreed to a \$3 million (£1.79 million) settlement of a disability discrimination case involving 87 applicants. The deal struck with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, is the largest out-of-court monetary settlement of a disability case under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992. The firm is to pay the applicants, who were denied employment because they were perceived to be disabled, awards ranging from \$10,000 to \$120,000.

Hammerson suitors

HAMMERSON, the property company, confirmed that it has received approaches for its Canadian business although the shares fell 4p to 397½p. Ronald Spinney, the Hammerson chief executive, said: "During 1998, we have received approaches from several investors interested in acquiring Hammerson's Canadian business. We are currently carrying out a preliminary review of these approaches and examining the strategic options open to the group." The statement followed speculation in the Canadian press that a deal was likely.

Peterhouse profitable

PRE-TAX profits at Peterhouse Group, the builder based in West Yorkshire and best known for its Totty construction operations, jumped from £400,000 to £1.4 million on turnover up fivefold at £33.1 million in the six months to June 30. Earnings per share were up 51 per cent to 5.9p and the interim dividend is to be increased by 23 per cent to 2.1p. David Jackson, the chairman, said that current trading remains buoyant and that the order book is strong. The shares fell yesterday from 86½p to 82½p.

James Beattie better

JAMES BEATTIE, the store group, raised pre-tax profits by 22 per cent to £2.7 million on sales up by 2 per cent to £44.5 million in the six months to July 31. Earnings rose 22 per cent to 4.4p a share and a rise in the half-year dividend from 2½p to 3p a share is proposed. On current trading, the company says that in August sales rose 8 per cent on the same period last year. The shares rose 54p to 153½p. Beattie said that gross margin has been maintained and, given trading conditions, costs have been even more tightly controlled.

Doulton shares slide

SHARES in Royal Doulton fell 27½p to a new low of 106p yesterday after the chinaware, crystal and glass company reported a 37 per cent drop in underlying profits to £2.72 million before tax. Adjusted earnings fell 41 per cent to 3.2p a share. The interim dividend is held at 2.3p a share but the company gave warning that payment of future dividends will depend on the conclusion of a business review to be completed at the end of this year. It said that its stock reduction programme, begun last year, was "an essential part of improving efficiency."

Wessex deal cleared


THE £1.4 billion takeover of Wessex Water by Enron, the American utility group, has been given the green light by Peter Mandelson, the Trade and Industry Secretary, after Enron gave assurances that Wessex would be kept ring-fenced from the rest of the group. The conditions are to ensure that Wessex can still be regulated clearly by the Director-General of Water Services. The takeover valued Wessex at 630p a share. It is Enron's first venture into the water business and Enron Water has been set up as a vehicle for its water ambitions.

Premium bonds win

PREMIUM bonds remain the public's most popular investment, with the sales record being broken for the second time this year, National Savings has said. Sales reached £84 million in July, breaking the record set in April. Sales exceeded £3 billion in 1997-98. On average premium bonds yield an annual tax-free income of 5 per cent in prizes, outdoing most forms of saving, but the unique appeal is the £1 million prize draw. The bonds attract serious investors — 150,000 people hold £20,000, the maximum allowed.

Yorkshire weakens

YORKSHIRE GROUP, the speciality chemical company, saw pre-tax profits drop from £5.5 million to £3.1 million in the half year to June 30. Sales fell from £55.7 million to £32.8 million because of divestments, although sales in the continuing textile dye and chemical business declined by £4.8 million. Earnings per share fell to 5.1p (8.6p). The dividend is held at 3.05p. The shares dropped from 149p to 133½p. Yorkshire said: "The short-term outlook is far from encouraging... we are redoubling our efforts to... restore adequate levels of profitability."



The "Shell" Transport and Trading Company, Public Limited Company

Interim Dividend 1998

Notice is hereby given that a balance of the Register will be struck on Friday, 2nd October, 1998 for the preparation of warrants for an Interim dividend for the year 1998 of 5.3p per 25p Ordinary share payable on Monday, 2nd November, 1998. The Interim dividend will be paid as a foreign income dividend.

For transferees to receive this dividend, their transfers must be lodged with the Company's Registrar—Lloyds Bank Registrars, The Causeway, Worthing, West Sussex BN99 6DA, not later than 3pm on Friday, 2nd October, 1998.

Share Warrants to Bearer

The Coupon to be presented for the above dividend will be No. 202 which must be deposited at Lloyds Bank Registrars, Corporate Actions, Ground Floor, P.O. Box 1000, Antholins House, 71 Queen Street, London EC4N 1SL (not later than 3pm on Wednesday, 21st October, 1998, to receive payment on Monday, 2nd November, 1998) or may be surrendered through Messieurs Lazard Frères et Cie, 121 boulevard Haussmann, 75382, Paris Cedex 08.

By Order of the Board
Miss J.E. Munsiff
Secretary

Shell Centre,
London SE1 7NA
10th September, 1998

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.82	2.84
Austria S	21.80	22.10
Belgium F	61.81	66.85
Canada \$	2.652	2.675
Denmark K	11.42	12.03
France F	5.32	5.37
France P	10.00	9.22
Germany Dm	3.007	2.795
Greenland D	6.16	4.77
Hong Kong \$	13.84	12.54
Iceland K	129	129
India R	1.885	1.885
Israel S	6.85	6.19
Italy L	2083	2746
Japan Yen	240.30	222.77
Netherlands G	0.689	0.810
Norway Kr	3.401	3.106
New Zealand \$	2.40	2.18
Portugal Esc	303.78	283.79
S Africa R	11.09	10.13
Spain P	252.84	234.05
Sweden Kr	14.30	13.00
Switzerland F	2.492	2.372
Turkey L	47357	44235
USA \$	1.786	1.843

Rates for small denomination currencies only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Collect rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

City Diary, page 31

Sympathy without solace



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

The Monetary Policy Committee has done a Green-day for the first time acknowledging concern about the deteriorating world economy, just as the Fed Chairman did last week. Both statements were immediately pounced on by the markets as evidence that interest rates are on their way down.

In both cases, however, the central banks did little more than express sympathy for the condemned man without any firm promise of loosening the monetary noose. There is little doubt that interest rates on both sides of the Atlantic have peaked, but much doubt about when the first cut will come.

Alan Greenspan was his usual balanced self last week, admitting that the international scene could do the American economy harm but still emphasising his concern about domestic inflationary pressures. The MPC said that a deterioration in the world outlook could increase the risk of inflation falling below target and that it would continue to monitor these risks. The wording suggests that, as of now, the implication in emerging markets is not enough to warrant a rate cut and that things will have to get worse before one will be countenanced.

It may be that the Fed and the MPC are forced by ever-nastier evidence of disinflation and falling growth around the world to cut rates sooner than either envis-

age at this juncture. There is a considerable body of opinion which believes that the world outlook is miserable enough to warrant immediate action and that central bankers are being woefully complacent. Time will tell.

Although British industry was furious that rates were not cut, it should at least be grateful that the MPC has proved sensitive enough to smell the stench outside its ivory tower and, not before time, signal that British rates have peaked.

Its decision to speak may simply mean that Eddie George is scared that angry out-of-work men will start marching from Jarrow to Dulwich. Judging by the fury that greeted yesterday's rate announcement, a soothing statement was the minimum required for a committee that is trying to nurture a reputation with the public. Cynics might also suggest that invoking the great unknowns of the world economy at this stage may give the MPC a get out if the economy goes belly-up. The world economy is always a usefully uncontrollable scapegoat.

A less sceptical interpretation is that the MPC, wilfully oblivious of world events for so long, is

finally genuinely worried. It is notable that the statement came when the pound was already falling. Given that the Bank has been so paranoid about a precipitous decline in the exchange rate, one must conclude that it is now actively seeking a sterling depreciation. Nevertheless, it is still a good bet that, while talking the pound lower, the committee will control the speed of its slide by keeping rates where they are.

Retailers to get their fingers burnt

The country's latest glitzy shopping mall threw open its doors yesterday. All the familiar high street names have rushed to take space in the Trafford Centre, at rents that soar as far as £350 per square foot for the most sought after space.

It seems mean to spoil the party mood, but do they realise they are taking on these commit-

ments just as the retail scene turns really nasty?

The latest survey from the CBI contains a message of true gloom. August was a lousy month on the high street, the worst for three years. On balance, the respondents are hoping for a little uplift in September, but that is only because they reckon that September last year was particularly depressed by shoppers' preoccupation with the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Even in this hope they are betraying the notorious optimism of the breed.

The grim truth is more evident in Merrill Lynch's sliced forecast for Marks & Spencer, taking profits back below £1 billion. Planning for the long term sees the company caught with funding large capital expenditure just as shoppers decide to cut their spending. The racks of reduced-price clothes in M&S stores recently have indicated that M&S, has not been immune from the

difficulties that hit the high street this summer.

But things will get worse. Faced with daily news of job losses while funding increased taxes and mortgages, consumers are inevitably becoming more cautious.

Sir Richard Greenbury can afford to take a long-term view, although it is commendably generous of him to do so, considering that he will not be running the company when the benefits of its current expansion programme show through. Not every retailer now rushing to take space in Manchester's new mega-mall is so well cushioned.

The traditional 25-year lease with five-yearly reviews enabling the rent to move only upwards, never down, have crucified many an ambitious retailer. There can be no doubt that this downturn will claim more victims.

Because shoppers favour the big out-of-town centres over traditional high streets, retailers feel they cannot afford not to be repre-

sented there and so the rent levels surge in places like Trafford Park and Lakeside. But if the CBI survey is anything to go by, there will be some tenants who soon regret their enthusiasm to commit to such high levels of outgoings. And the traditional retail lease allows for no change of mind.

A government bug warning

Where will you be as 1999 turns into 2000? Ask even the sanest and soberest of individuals this question and the unanimous conclusion is that wherever else they may be, they most certainly will not be taking to the skies for a few days over the end of that year and beginning of the next.

The threat of the millennium bug is now, belatedly, being taken seriously by Government. Don Cruickshank was being coy yesterday about the content of his discussions with the Home Office but the likelihood is that he warned of the need to be prepared for mayhem. In the worst case scenario, utilities may fail to function and public unrest could take to the streets.

The Bank of England is now looking hard at the possible implications of the bug. While industrialists fully expect it to have an effect on their activities, the Government has apparently still to factor into its forecasts any element of a slowdown caused by the pesky creature.

The high street banks are agonising over how best to deal with the public relations side of the issue. They maintain that their systems will be alright on the night but how can they get that message across without alarming some customers to the prospect that there might even be a question mark over the matter? If even a small proportion of customers take the view that they will feel happier if their accounts were empty over the crucial weekend, they, and not the bug, would wreak havoc.

Snack sized UB

UNITED BISCUITS has at last produced a set of figures that have out-performed the analysts' expectations. Eric Nicoli, the chief executive, may be saved from having to make the embarrassing call to the headhunters, which at one stage seemed an almost inevitable conclusion to his disappointing reign. But now the Penguin producer is on the up, its new ranges apparently hitting the spot with hungry customers. UB is reduced to a snack size version of its former self, but at least it is a healthy one.

UB exceeds forecasts with £51.2m

BY MATTHEW BARBOUR

A TIGHTER focus on its branded biscuits division and increased spending on marketing helped United Biscuits, the UK food producer, to exceed half-year profit forecasts.

The group, which has been through a restructuring programme after reporting a marked slow-down in growth last year, announced pre-tax profits for six months to July 18 up 14 per cent at £51.2 million (£45.1 million last time), about 7 per cent higher than analysts' forecasts.

John Warren, finance director, said: "We are now back on an even keel. Apart from small bolt-on deals, we're happy to concentrate on organic sales growth which we hope to increase from 3 to around 5 per cent."

During the past six months the group has sold its snack foods operations in Australia and Europe and bought biscuit operations from Campbell Soup and PepsiCo.

Mr Warren said: "We are much more focused now and by investing in new plants,

new equipment and especially marketing to support our brands, feel we will be able to punch much harder than our competitors."

The group has increased its marketing budget from 11.6 per cent to 13.1 per cent of sales, or £108 million.

McVitie's Group performed in line with expectations, increasing sales by 6 per cent, accounting for about two thirds of overall group sales.

UK Foods had mixed fortunes over the half-year, with its successful savoury snacks operation offset by rising fish prices, which affected the seafood business.

Because of the economic turmoil in the Far East, the group has also decided to close its Indonesian operation.

Turnover on continuing operations climbed 5 per cent to £825.5 million.

The interim dividend has been increased to 3.6p (from 3.5p). Earnings per share are up 13 per cent at 7p (6.2p). United Biscuits shares rose 8p to 203p at yesterday's close.

Goldsmiths first half deepens

BY FRASER NELSON

SHARES of Goldsmiths fell to a three-year low yesterday as the jewellery company said its sales growth had slowed from 10 per cent to 7 per cent.

The company's traditional first-half loss deepened from £305,000 to £588,000 in the six months to August 1, which it blamed on the absence of wind-fall spending.

Its shares dropped 22.5p to 187.5p yesterday, mainly on fears that it is spending too much on store openings while the retail climate worsens.

It opened ten stores over the spring and summer, and intends to open another five in the coming months. Its debt has now almost doubled, to £20.1 million (£11.6 million).

The company said its sales growth picked up to 8.2 per cent over the past six weeks.

City analysts shaved £200,000 from forecasts and now expect a profit of £5.6 million for the full year.

The interim dividend rises 9 per cent to 3p a share.

Gallaher in share buyback

BY ROBERT COLE

GALLAHER, the cigarette company, is planning to buy back up to 5 per cent of the firm's shares. If it bought the full 5 per cent at yesterday's share price, the exercise would cost £130 million.

The announcement helped Gallaher to absorb a fall in pre-tax profits and news that Gallaher's UK share of the UK cigarette market dipped from 39.5 to 39.1 per cent.

Headline pre-tax profits fell from £167 million to £128 million. Underlying operating profit was down just £3 million at £170 million. Gallaher cited the rise in cheap, illegal imports of cigarettes, and increasing tax levies, as reasons for the slip.

The interim dividend is 6.8p sharply down from 9.62p. However, Gallaher emphasised that the lower payment was part of a readjustment of the way the dividend payment was divided.

Tempus, page 30

Marston in talks with Nomura International

BY OUR CITY STAFF

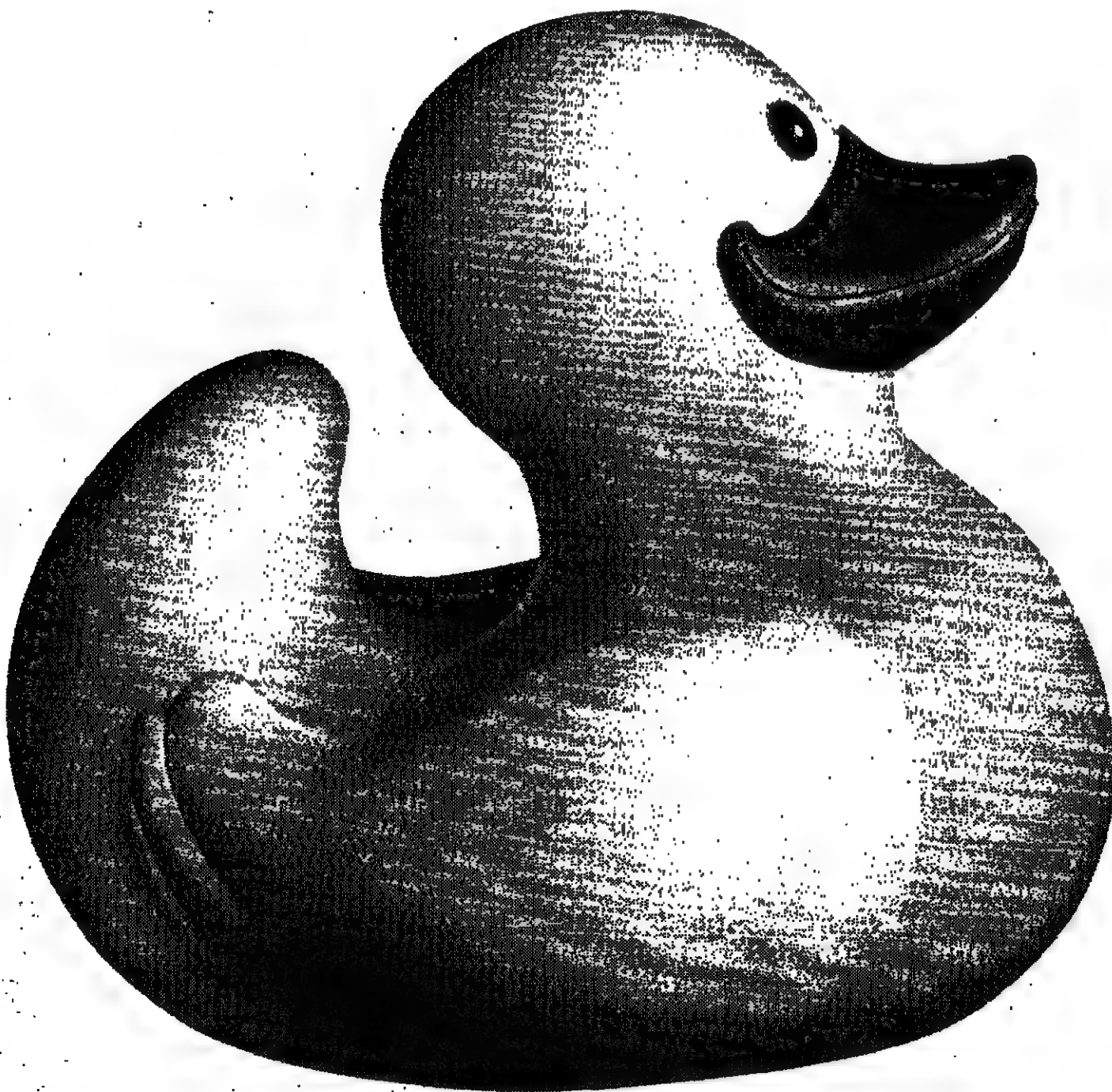
MARSTON, Thompson and Evershed, the brewer and pub owner, is in talks with Nomura International about the securitisation of its 600 tenanted pubs.

Analysts estimate Marston could raise as much as £100 million through the deal. Nomura has developed a niche in taking pub companies down the same route. The statement from Marston

group's share price. The shares leapt 42½p to a high of 251p in speculative trade before closing at 224p.

Marston declined to say what it plans to do with cash raised by securitisation. There was speculation the deal could free the brewer to make acquisitions.

Nomura now owns around 10 per cent of Britain's pubs, after the £1.2 billion acquisition of the Innkeeper and Spring Inns chain of pubs in September 1997 to form the



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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL GEARK

Stock Market Writer
of the YearM&S suffers on back of
probable profits reverse

MARKS & SPENCER is about to suffer its first profits setback in more than 30 years. The blue chip retailer fell 20p to 474p on turnover of 8.5 million shares as at least three brokers downgraded their profit forecasts.

Merrill Lynch has cut its forecast from £1.06 billion to less than £1 billion. That compares with the pre-tax profit of £1.16 billion in the year to March 31 1998. The broker has also cut its numbers for 1999 from £1.15 billion to £1.04 billion.

Rival HSBC cut its estimate from £1.05 billion to £1.02 billion while Credit Suisse First Boston is reckoned to be looking for only £1 billion.

A spokesman for M&S said he could not recall a time in the past 30 years when the group's profits had fallen. But he added: "There has probably never been a time when we've been spending so much money growing the business."

Last year M&S spent £197 million on buying 19 outlets from Littlewoods. "We are planning for this business in the long term, and we're not expecting to see full return on the investment we've made until 2000 or 2001."

Share prices generally closed just above their lows of the day with dealers fearing that the London market will soon be testing the 5,000 level. It followed the decision of the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee to peg rates and further sharp opening falls on Wall Street.

The FTSE 100 index tumbled 174.7 to close at 5,136.6 with the FTSE 250 index down 59.9 at 4,751.8. Total turnover topped one billion shares.

In what is seen as a defensive move, Cazenove, the broker, has been tipping the utilities. It likes Yorkshire Water, up 4p at 490p, United Utilities, 3p better at 868p, Scottish Hydro, 19p higher at 603p, and Southern Electric, up 17p at 608p.

Peter Mandelson, Trade and Industry Secretary, has given the go-ahead to Enron's £1.4 billion bid for Wessex Water. The shares celebrated with a rise of 3p at 625p.

BAT Industries finally succumbed to profit taking losing 27p at 451p after its split with Allied Zurich, which has failed to attract support and ended 83p down at 646p.

Those companies that lost their place as constituents of



Roy Gardner, chief executive of Centrica, the gas supplier, which is successfully expanding into the electricity market

the FTSE 100 index earlier this week came under renewed selling pressure. British Steel retreated 2p to 103p, with RMC Group also 24p off at 72p. Rank Group 1p at 25p, Enterprise Oil 9p at 33p, and Lasso 3p to 15p.

Celtic Telecom, which has been promoted to the top 100, fell 22p to 602p on profit taking. Lehman Brothers, the

US securities house, has set a target price of 930p.

SmithKline Beecham dropped 2p to 688p after BT Alex Brown, the broker, lowered its recommendation on the shares from "buy" to "market perform".

A return to the black at Centrica for the first time since last year's demerger was rewarded with a rise of 9p at

108p — making it the best performer among the top 100. The company is holding onto its market share and has already signed up 500,000 electricity customers.

A "buy" recommendation by Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, lifted Perpetual 102p to 103p after a meeting earlier in the week. It has set a target price of £40.

It was fun and games on Olex where Premier League champions Arsenal surged £1.00 to £4.00 on learning of the bid approach from Michael Green's Carlton Communications, 2p firmer at 42p. City speculators said any offer is likely to be pitched at about £5.60 on earnings of the entire club at £2.5 million.

The move comes just days after BSkyB, 6p lighter at 476p, launched an agreed bid for another Premier side Manchester United, 6p dearer at 22p.

Meanwhile, Aston Villa jumped 27p to 660p, with Leeds firming 3p to 107p. Sunderland 7p to 59p and Tottenham Hotspur 2p to 66p. Alan Sugar, chairman of Spurs, has already put his 40 per cent stake up for sale.

A profits warning left AIM-listed Fibernet nursing a fall of 53p at 338p.

Geo Interactive retreated 4p to 37p with revenues not now expected to exceed 1997 levels. Difficult summer markets are also taking a heavy toll of Fergoson International, down 6p at 39p.

GILT-EDGED: Bond yields fell sharply on the back of a weak CBI survey and comments made by the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee after its decision to peg rates. The Government's intention to raise rates now appears unlikely after the slowdown in the world economy. Dealers say it could be the signal for future cuts.

In the futures pit, the December series of the long gilt soared £1.17 to £113.96 as the total number of contracts completed reached 69,000. The short dated gilt also rose £0.70 to £106.50. In the cash market Treasury 8 per cent 2021 surged £2½ to £139p, while in shorts Treasury 7 per cent 2002 put on £17½ to £104p.

NEW YORK: The threat of impeachment hanging over President Clinton sent Wall Street sharply lower. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 217.82 points at 7,647.20.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 7647.20 (-217.82)
S&P Composite 929.99 (-23.21)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 14666.03 (-49.51)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 7989.96 (-55.49)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 1021.31 (-9.28)

Sydney:
ASX 2562.3 (-16.2)

Frankfurt:
DAX 4747.33 (-203.54)

Singapore:
Straits 165.00 (-30.46)

Brussels:
BELX 3504.93 (-103.88)

Paris:
CAC-40 3598.35 (-172.78)

Zurich:
SIX 1240.70 (-53.48)

London:
FT 30 3212.9 (-116.7)
FTSE 100 5136.6 (-174.7)
FTSE 250 4751.8 (-59.9)
FTSE 350 2467.6 (-74.3)
FTSE Europe 100 2422.8 (-118.8)
FTSE Asia 2295.6 (-68.0)
FTSE Pacific 2402.4 (-58.7)
FTSE Global 2402.4 (-58.7)
FTSE Govt Sec 109.73 (+1.12)
RUSSEL 3000 1096.40
S&P 500 929.99
DAX 4747.33
Euronext 1,461.17 (+0.01)
German Mark 2.454 (-0.022)
Exchange Index 102.14 (-0.4)
Bank of England official rate (Hort)
ECU 1.4512
EBSR 1.2561
RPI 165.00 (2.5%) Jan 1997-100
165.00 (2.4%) Jan 1997-100

RECENT ISSUES

Allied Zurich 646p - 83p
Chancellor & Wills 12p - 12p
Coca-Cola (160) 157 - 3p
Enterprise Cap B Pl 55p - 55p
Firststate Diamonds 94p - 94p
GEC PWR Warrants 104p - 104p
Inner Link Foods 99p - 99p
Kiln 122p - 122p
MEPC Non Cum Pl 96p - 96p
Murray Ext Rn Cap 18p - 18p
Murray Ext Rn Inc 106p - 106p
Murray Ext Zero Div 99p - 99p
Paradise Pictures 38p - 38p
Private & Com Fin 65p - 65p
Sofra Petroleum 40p - 40p
SupaRite 90p - 90p
Synect Cpl Wt 98/02 21p - 21p
Tombak 157p - 157p
Tribune IT Index 512p - 512p
Walker Greenbank 3p - 3p
Wulmslow Group 3p - 3p

RIGHTS ISSUES

Cammell Ltd 3p (30p) 3p - 3p

MAJOR CHANGES

RISER:
Shenwood Int 92p (+100p)
Bell Bros 133p (+10p)
Diploma 183p (+12p)
Davis Service 353p (+23p)
Nail Express 939p (+58p)
Bovis Homes 182p (+8p)
Lion Park 385p (+17p)
Liong 181p (+15p)
Moultrey 185p (+75p)
Dialog 184p (+12p)

FALLS:
Royal Doulton 105p (-27p)
Clyde Blowers 106p (-11p)
Fibernet 338p (-53p)
Telecom 850p (-12p)
Royal & Sun All 461p (-16p)
Schroders 1040p (-130p)
Calm Energy 123p (-14p)
Allied Zurich 646p (-83p)
Lon Forfiling 113p (-14p)
Micro Focus 296p (-35p)
Same Group 580p (-67p)

Closing Prices Page 33

TEMPUS

Tired BTR

AN analyst summed up BTR rather cruelly yesterday. He said: "If BTR was a horse, it would be taken out and shot." OK, so it is a bit of an overstatement, but investors might want to find out the number of the nearest glue factory, just in case.

The former conglomerate's shares are now trading on a multiple of about 0.7 times sales. Given that all the unwanted businesses sold since 1996 have been flogged for an average of 1.2 times sales, this appears to be a pretty damning judgement on the core activities that have been retained.

It is hard on Ian Strachan, the chief executive, who, it is widely agreed, has got a good price for the businesses he has sold. His strategy, which is not stupid, has been to move BTR away from its traditional focus on keeping margins high. He doesn't mind

thinner margins, so long as sales are stimulated.

Unfortunately, in yesterday's interim results, the only sales growth from the key businesses came from acquisitions. BTR struggled particularly in Australia, its base for exports to South-East Asia, and Brazil. There are also lingering fears that the kind of revenue decline that has been accepted in the automotive part of the divisions.

BTR badly needs to show it can make the reformation work. Analysts, however, were downgrading their full-year profit forecasts yesterday. Expectations are that BTR's earnings per share will be 12.5p net 14.5p putting the shares on a price earnings multiple of 8.6 times. That is pitiful, but the upside, even at this 14-year low, is hard to foresee.

Gallagher

GIVEN the challenges of operating against hostile forces mostly in the mature UK market, the company that makes Silk Cut will struggle to grow.

The company says that after years of decline, smoker numbers have now stabilised. However, long-term pressure on Gallagher's core developed market, the result of the health risks of smoking, still remain.

The wide disparity in tobacco taxes between Britain and Europe means smuggling continues to impinge on performance and the imminent curtailment and abolition of cigarette advertising will make Gallagher's life more difficult.

Growth, if it comes, will be outside the UK. It will not be easy to achieve although the skill and experience of

Gallagher's management

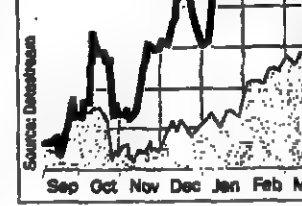
should comfort investors. The key investment attraction, however, is not based on the possible growth of the business but from the income it generates. That income, given the additive nature of this company's product, is also reliable.

The price/earnings ratio may give the impression of fair value but the dividend yield of 6 per cent makes the shares look cheap.

Share buybacks, made possible thanks to healthy cash flows, reinforce the positive argument and yesterday's announcement of a 5 per cent buyback may not be the last.

Ethical considerations aside, Gallagher is a buy.

SMOKIN'



Centrica

WHAT a turnaround at Centrica. Not only has the company delivered a pre-tax profit in the first half but there also the strong hint of a dividend, some other form of shareholder return, next year. It is a far cry from the days when old British Gas (from which Centrica emerged) faced near collapse through the combination of atrocious service and financially crippling take-or-pay contracts. Even the boiler repair side has started to make money, helped by substantial investment in new technology and an overdue jump in productivity.

But while the transformation is good news, question marks linger over the long-term prospects for the gas supplier. The whole domestic energy market is becoming more competitive. In gas, where deregulation is complete, the former monopoly supplier has undoubtedly suffered. The degree of pain it

ultimately feels depends on how successful it is in gaining electricity customers in a deregulation process that is only just starting. Centrica is ambitious and is pumping millions of pounds into promoting itself.

Yet while competition in energy is tough, and the restructuring has far to go, Centrica is proving itself to be a pugnacious competitor and operates from a position of strength. Hold.

Sema

THE sighs of disappointment at yesterday's interims from Sema were almost audible. They certainly lacked the fizz of Logica's figures earlier in the week, and did not deliver what you would expect from a company with such a high share price rating. After all, it is now a serious *faux pas* in the IT sector to deliver anything other than double-digit sales growth. Sema's 9.1 per cent simply will not do.

The City is losing patience.

and Sema shares fell sharply from 647p to 580p yesterday. The shares have diverged from 825p since July, and at this rate its membership of the exclusive FTSE 100 club, to which it gained admission this week, could be the shortest possible.

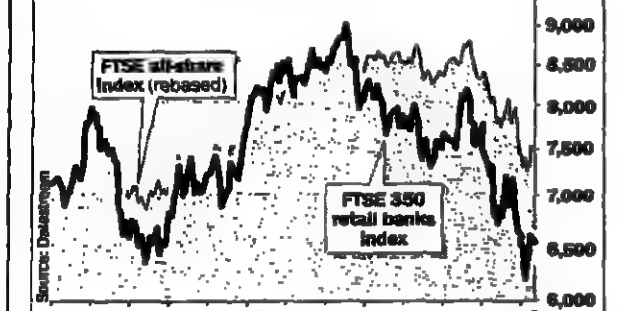
The £77 million sale of its 50 per cent stake in BaeSema — its joint venture with British Aerospace — should have improved matters, but instead it cast doubt over the future of its other defence interests in Germany and France.

Shareholders may also wonder about the logic behind Sema telling the world that it wants to make a \$1 billion acquisition in the US, possibly of a mobile telephone company. Now everyone knows this, Sema is highly unlikely to pick up any bargains.

It is another risk factor that will continue to drive the share price down. Sell.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE



IT WAS a bad day for the banks with dealers reliving their nightmares from the 1980s when the Latin American debt crisis knocked them for six.

This time it is not just South America that is giving cause for concern. Russia and the Far East are also taking their toll on investors' nerves.

Barclays led the way lower with a fall of 106p at £11.74. It has already revealed losses of £250 million relating to its exposure to Russia.

Others to lose ground included Standard Char-

tered down 26p to 442p. HSBC 66p to £11.80, Lloyds TSB 32p to 685p, and NatWest 42p to 982p.

It followed the shock news that banks such as Credit Suisse First Boston and Societe Generale are being forced to write off billions of dollars because of their exposure to Russia.

Neil Fletcher at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, urged investors to sit tight. "You don't want to sell Barclays at these levels. The mortgage banks have actually been outperforming and are seen as a defensive play."

COMMODITIES

LIFE

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

ROBUSTA COFFEES

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

WHITE SUGAR

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

MEAT & LIVESTOCK

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

COMMISSION

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

LIFFE OPTIONS

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Long Gilt

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Three Mth Sterling

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Three Mth Eurodollar

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Three Mth Euro

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

FTSE 100

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

MONEY RATES (%)

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

Gold

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Silver

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Copper

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Aluminium

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Nickel

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

LIFFE FUTURES

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

DOLLAR RATES

Australia

112.91	113.40	112.91	113.71	
112.85	114.04	112.83	113.96	6425
112.85	113.62	112.85	113.72	7
			112.39	0
			106.75	0
			106.90	0

Mark Galeotti links the *mafiya* to the current economic crisis

The three faces of Russian crime

When the full history of the present Russian collapse is pieced together, the country's own *mafiya* will be seen to have had an important role — just as this crisis is playing its part in reshaping Russian organised crime. But what is this *mafiya*? From time to time, practical people from various law enforcement agencies raise the name of one Russian or another with me and ask what they often feel is a simple question: "Is he a mafioso?" Rarely can I give the yes-or-no answer they seek. The Russian *mafiya* is not a structured, disciplined organisation such as the Sicilian Mafia or Japanese Yakuza.

Indeed, one of the most distinctive things about Russian organised crime is precisely how disorganised it is. It ranges from swaggering Chechen gangsters to seemingly legitimate Russian entrepreneurs whose business empires have been built on the back of money laundering and rigged privatisation auctions. Along with overtly criminal activities such as protection racketeering, drug smuggling and prostitution, most are also involved in much legal business. Indeed, the most important criminal godfathers now work mainly within the legal or largely legal sectors.

They may fiddle their taxes (not a sin limited to Russians) or establish illegal cartels. But they have long since hived off their protection rackets and narcotics rings to hungry protégés. Further, if one looks at the so-called "oligarchs" and the business empires currently dominating Russia, few do not have skeletons in their cupboards, and in some cases still sitting in their boardrooms.

During the tsarist era, these people built state-protected monopolies or lived as tax farmers off the back of the peasantry. Under Soviet rule, they joined the Party and enjoyed both the legal and illegal perks of their positions. Today, there is frighteningly little distinguishing the new generation of criminal-businesspeople from their legitimate counterparts.

Both tend to be flexible, able and entrepreneurial. The criminals simply see crime often as the quickest and easiest route to money, power and security, but have no objection to working licitly if the balance of danger against opportunity is right.

The tales of three criminals — all true but anonymous for obvious reasons — illustrate the role the *mafiya* has played in the collapse and what it means for them.

Ivan is not quite one of the oligarchs, but a powerful mover and shaker in Moscow. In his rapid rise his first bank was largely built on the financial dealings of the Sointsevo gang, Russia's largest and



Organised criminals, disorganised crime: the *mafiya* is not a single unit but a collection of individuals, ranging from the mover and shaker, through the 'businessman', to the thug

most entrepreneurial criminal combine. Ivan was never a gangster, but when he was younger he worked with them, laundering their cash and using their drugs and protection profits as investment capital.

Today he has moved on, hobnobbing with the great and the good and heads a diversified financial empire.

Sointsevo money still moves through his banks on the way to Cyprus, Israel and Austria (and, often, via London to

Spain or North America). However, *mafiya* money accounts for at most 25 per cent of the total capital flight from Russia. Figures are, again, often misleading, but capital flight probably has totalled \$25 (£15 billion) to \$35 billion since 1992. Some of this (about a third, averaged over the past four years) has rotated back into Russia. In some cases, this has been money laundering, pure and simple, but it also represents the desire of many firms

to appear to have won Western investment (sometimes simply to lure unwary Russian investors). This capital flight has been central to Ivan's prosperity, a prosperity untroubled by tax problems.

Ivan relies on clever accountants and well-placed bribes to divert revenue agents. He also has local and national politicians in his circle. He does not "own" them — everyone is a private entrepreneur in their own right in today's Russia —

but there are understandings. Ironically, this self-proclaimed "ultra-capitalist" bankrolls Communist and Liberal Democrat politicians in the Duma. They have useful local connections but Ivan also has benefits from the very lack of legal and economic stability in Russia and the freedom for manoeuvre it gives him. Today he feels relaxed: if there is a return to tighter state control, he is confident that he can strike a deal with any likely government.

and his business empire runs not on roubles but dollars (and he has high hopes for the euro). Even most criminals are no threat: his empire has 2,000 armed security officers in Moscow region alone, and one senior local police chief's daughter has a very well-paid sinecure in one of his firms.

Boris is the very model of the modern mafioso. Instead of the tattoos of the old-style godfathers of the "thieves-within-code", he favours designer

label suit jackets and Levi's. He describes himself as an entrepreneur; within the *mafiya* he is an *avtoritet*, an "authority". He has a gang in St Petersburg, but they hide behind various facades. During the day, his leg-breakers wear the uniforms of his private security company and his drug peddlers operate kiosks selling sweets and alcohol.

Boris also has substantial business interests, though. At the moment, Boris is bucking

the trend, pulling the money he salted abroad back into Russia. He is going on a buying spree, snapping up small and medium-sized businesses and real estate from bankrupted owners. He did quite well out of the initial privatisation campaign that followed the collapse of the USSR, but he is now a much more experienced businessman. Then, he — like most criminal-businesspeople — relied on cherrypicking what looked like individual profitable assets: he is now looking to round out and rationalise his holdings.

Sasha fits the Central Casting model of the Russian mafioso, from his heavy gold jewelry to his entourage of thugs, molls and hangers-on. Back in Vladivostok, his gang ran a firm that bought copper to be smuggled over the border into China and sold for about 25 times its original value. Their main activities were parasitic, especially racketeering.

It is men such as Sasha who force Russian business to pay on average 10 per cent of their profits for protection or up to 30 to 40 per cent of profits on security.

Sasha's education was hard won in the prison system, and he knows always to have escape routes. He bought a house in Highbury on one shopping trip abroad, harbouring hopes of sending his sons to a British private school to become proper "dzhentlemen". He also has properties in Vienna and Marbella, and a Greek passport. He has not given up on Russia, and the lieutenant he has left in charge back in Vladivostok has been warned that Sasha still has eyes and friends everywhere. For the moment he feels it is time to move on, though. He is already on his way to Spain with his family (and his favourite bullet-proof Jeep Cherokee), and looks forward to enjoying the sun and the company of fellow international criminals there.

The Ivans, Borises and Sashas have dominated the Russian economic and political system, from the banks to the gutters. The often-repeated figure that 40 per cent of the Russian economy is dominated by organised crime is essentially meaningless when Ivans can drain the state of revenue and stymie economic reform. Boris can distort the market and turn privatisation into kleptocracy and Sashas can force two thirds of businesses to pay protection. In their own ways, they have all contributed to Russia's crisis — and in their own ways they are all benefiting from it.

Dr Mark Galeotti is Director of the Organised Russian & Eurasian Crime Research Unit at Keele University.

Reinsured

MILLIONS of pounds of City fees are up for grabs after the merger of Commercial Union and General Accident into the less euphoniously named CGU. The merger was completed in June and the company has started beauty contests to narrow down the two sets of advisers into one.

This does not always happen in such mergers — a large number of Guinness and Grand Metropolitan advisers seem to have stuck around with Diageo, for example, which seems to have a brace of most advisers. But the insurers are a more ruthless lot.

Morgan Stanley, Kleinworts, Hoare Govett, Cazenove and PricewaterhouseCoopers have an anxious wait on the CU side, while it is nail-biting time for Schroders, Goldman Sachs, Merrill Lynch, Cazenove and KPMG for GA. Good thing. Keeps them on their toes.

SO BTR's share price is now back to where it was before the bid for Pilkington in 1986, despite the best efforts of



"We're thinking of putting in a bid for Spurs"

the luckless Ian Strachan. By a pleasant symmetry, Pilkington shares are themselves a touch lower than when BTR launched the bid. From which one can only conclude that it would have made no difference who had won.

Single fare

A POP group called the Divine Comedy has recorded a song called *National Express*. So bowled over is the bus company that the track was played at yesterday's results briefing, copies of the CD went to everyone present, and they even printed out the lyric sheet. "When you're sad and feeling blue/With nothing better to do/Don't just sit there feeling stressed/Take a trip on the National Express." Berlin, Porter and Carmichael can rest easy in their graves.

But it gets worse. The tune is out as a single in the New Year and the board has contacted the group to offer help in making a video. With a cameo role for Phil White, the chief executive, they hope. A case of delayed adolescence?

Extra time

MICHAEL GREEN may not be an Arsenal fan, but I can reveal that his brother David, who runs the posh wallpaper makers Colefax & Fowler, is David once had a flight to Nice held up at the airport because he wanted to watch an old Arsenal game.

It was no ordinary Arsenal game, to be fair, but the 1989 match when his team won 2-0 at Anfield to secure the championship. Green's flight was delayed and he settled down in an armchair in the executive lounge at Heathrow to watch



it on TV. By the time the flight was called Arsenal were leading 1-0. Green refused to board until the final whistle, and because his luggage had already been loaded on to the aircraft they could not take off without him.

IN THE wake of the Manchester United takeover, the joke doing the rounds is that rival Manchester City, second division and languishing, is also going to be bought by a media concern — the Cartoon Channel.

Empowered

THE Queen is buying her electricity from British Gas. Well, after all, her highness has to economise these days and British Gas does promise a 12 per cent discount on current bills. Or could it be that Simon Lewis, ex-media boss at the gas giant, is doing a bit of sales work in his two-year secondment as royal spin doctor.

Actually the supply of electricity to Windsor Castle is a historical legacy acquired when British Gas bought a business which had the contract to supply the Berkshire royal residence.

Given Windsor Castle's troubled past the Queen may want to take advantage of British Gas's insurance services.

AND now, some City archeology. Half a century ago there was a broker called Joseph Sebag, one of the City's biggest. The firm is, alas, no more, but Gerry Bealer, who worked there for 36 years, is retiring at the end of the month after 54 years in the City.

His son Nick, a trader at Quartz Capital and occasional visitor to this column, is arranging a party for Gerry, who is leaving broker JM Finn at the age of 69, and is trying to track down anyone who worked with his father at the firm or at its successor, Carr Sebag. There must still be a few out there. "It's going to be a challenge for him to find things to do — the City has been his life," Nick tells me.

Garbage in

IT IS a good thing that the next tranche of data protection legislation has been delayed from October until some time next spring. Much of it stems from the implementation of more European directives, and to no one's great surprise some silly anomalies are cropping up all over the place.

According to a seminar at City lawyers Simmons & Simmons this week, even electronic address books are likely to fall foul. Apparently, if you have your Pison about your person and head for New York you will be guilty of transmitting personal data out of the European Union into a country which does not have comparable legislation. This would be contrary to the new Act and, I suppose, therefore a criminal offence. Not a problem you have with scribbles on the back of a cigarette packet.

Moonlighter

LORD LEVENE of Portoken, currently a senior adviser at Morgan Stanley, has landed

the chairman's job at Bankers Trust International, which now contains the equities arm of NatWest Markets, and he will have overall charge of European operations. But hang on, the same Peter Levene is standing for election as the next Lord Mayor of the City of London, a full-time job for a year, and has about as much chance of being defeated by the due electoral process as Saddam Hussein. One job too many, surely?

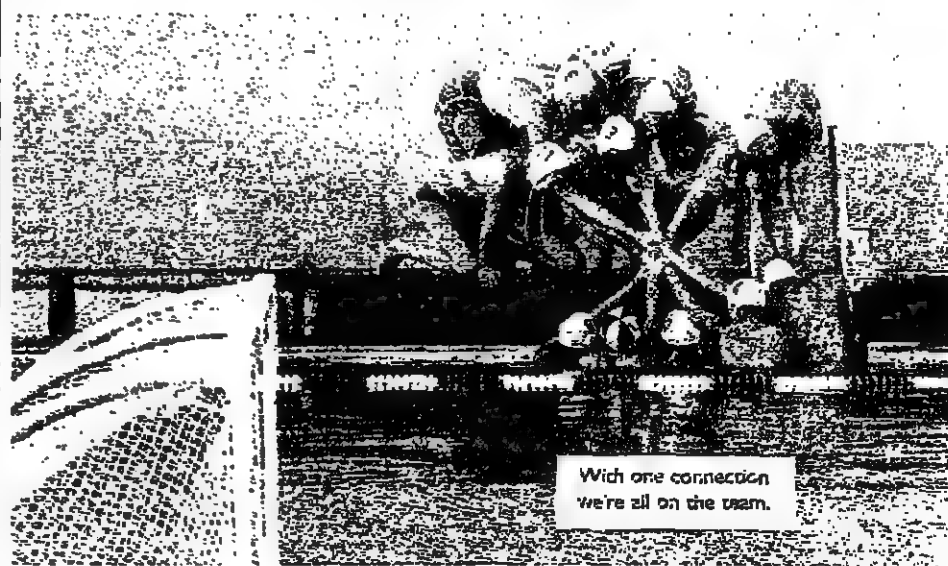
"I'm starting on Monday, which gives me a couple of months to get my feet under the table," he tells me. "It's true, the vast majority of my time has to be spent as Lord Mayor, but at the worst I'm only ten minutes away, and there's always the telephone." His new employer has no problem with the arrangement, he says.

But it does mean that the man whose last-but-one job was championing the delights of Canary Wharf as its chairman and chief executive is going to a bank that is shortly expected to reject a move there in favour of staying in the City. Levene says he knows nothing about the rumoured move to the Spitalfields site but if that is the case, "that's how the cookie crumbles."

MARTIN WALLER



Lord Levene will split roles for his first year in office



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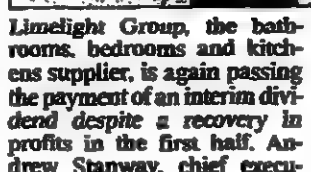


CABLE & WIRELESS

By GEORGE SIVELL

Wilson: positive growth

Rio Tinto added that cost savings from initiatives completed since the 1995 merger of CRA of Australia and RTZ of Britain were now running in excess of \$350 million before tax.



BY MATTHEW BARBOUR

However, he said international business, which accounts for 56 per cent of sales, had held up well. The interim dividend is unchanged at 5.2p. Earnings per share rose to 8.4p (7.1p).

TRAFFICMASTER, the company that operates a traffic information network, returned a profit of £1 million for the six months to June 30, against a loss of £594,000 in the previous comparable period. Sales rose from £2.88 million to £4.16 million and earnings of 3.5p a share were recorded against losses of 2.1p. David Martell, chief executive, said: "As the in-car telematics market continues to evolve and grow, further strategic relationships can be expected. Trafficmaster is very well placed to add substantial value to and to benefit from this marketplace." The shares fell 10 to 416p.

BIOCOMPATIBLES International, the medical coatings company, is to begin European marketing of the nylon balloon delivery system for its stents, the small metal tubes used to support damaged blood vessels. The move follows the company's receipt of European CE Mark approval for its Pen-Chant pre-mounted stent delivery system. Biocompatibles, a former stock market high-flyer, is already marketing stents with its body-friendly coating in 18 countries. Sales of the stents will start this week. The shares managed a lip rise to 76½ amid yesterday's market fall.

PENDRAGON, the motor dealer, is bracing itself for a decline in new car sales despite a robust performance by the UK car market in the first half. Yesterday the company reported a 56 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £10.4 million for the six months to June 30. Earnings rose 9 per cent to 11.7p a share. The interim dividend is lifted 11 per cent to 4p a share. Borrowings have risen from £25.2 million at the December year-end to £34.2 million at June 30, but the company hopes to reduce its costs as it adopts the market area approach. The shares fell 8.8p to 156.5p, having traded at 312.5p in March.

RECORD profits from housebuilding and a strong advance in income from property development helped John Laing to lift pre-tax profits 48 per cent in the first half. The construction, housing, property and investment group earned £18.4 million before tax in the six months to June 30, up from £12.4 million. Earnings were 3.75p (3.5p) a share, payable from earnings of 13.6p (9p). Sir Martin Laing, chairman, said that although he was confident about the outlook for the rest of 1998, prospects for 1999 were vulnerable to "a more pronounced slowdown in the global economy".

JOHN MOWLEM, the construction company, lifted pre-tax profits to £13.8 million from an adjusted £9.5 million in the half to June 30. Turnover was little changed at £714 million but operating profits rose 13 per cent to £12.7 million. The partial flotation of its subsidiary SGB, a Eurobond repayment and careful cash management eliminated net interest charges. Net interest receipts were £1.1 million, compared with a £1.7 million charge previously. The interim dividend rises to 2p a share (1.5p), from earnings of 4.1p (3.8p, adjusted).

SHARES of Ferguson International fell a further 7½p to 37½p yesterday after the labels supplier said it would only break even in the first half of the year and that the outlook for the second half remained uncertain. The company, whose shares have fallen from a five-year high of 42½p, blamed "difficult summer market conditions". Ferguson has concluded a four-month review of its operations and has decided to seek a buyer for its textiles labelling division.

FRANCE launched a partial privatisation of the Caisse Nationale de Prevoyance (CNP) Assurances yesterday, aiming to float 22 per cent of the capital and reducing its direct holding from 42.5 per cent to 1 per cent. The sale is to be accompanied by the issue of FFfr1.5 billion (£157 million) of new capital to finance development. The final price will be set on September 24. CNP Assurances is the biggest personal insurance company in France.

By ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

The cost of servicing the debt has been lowered because of interest payment holidays agreed with the company's bankers as part of the rescue plan. Helped also by interest rate movements the interest bill fell from £20.8 million to £18.2 million in the half year. However, a rise in interest payments is anticipated as some of the preferential interest arrangements end next July.

Again, there is no dividend.



By CHRIS AYRES

The group's shares fell 10 per cent to 580p, compared with a high of 825p in July—despite this week's inclusion in the FTSE 100 index. Analysts blamed the fall on Serma's "lacklustre" results.

Serna said it would sell its 50 per cent interest in BaSEMA, plus its South African military

business, during week ending June 30, from £26.2 million to £31.1 million, a rise of 1.1 per cent from £30.7 million to £61 million. While earnings per share rose 20.5 per cent from 4.01p to 4.83p.

A dividend of 0.94p (from 0.7p) is payable on November 2.

1989-90	1988-89	1987-88	1986-87	1985-86	1984-85	1983-84	1982-83	1981-82	1980-81	1979-80	1978-79	1977-78	1976-77	1975-76	1974-75	1973-74	1972-73	1971-72	1970-71	1969-70	1968-69	1967-68	1966-67	1965-66	1964-65	1963-64	1962-63	1961-62	1960-61	1959-60	1958-59	1957-58	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1952-53	1951-52	1950-51	1949-50	1948-49	1947-48	1946-47	1945-46	1944-45	1943-44	1942-43	1941-42	1940-41	1939-40	1938-39	1937-38	1936-37	1935-36	1934-35	1933-34	1932-33	1931-32	1930-31	1929-30	1928-29	1927-28	1926-27	1925-26	1924-25	1923-24	1922-23	1921-22	1920-21	1919-20	1918-19	1917-18	1916-17	1915-16	1914-15	1913-14	1912-13	1911-12	1910-11	1909-10	1908-09	1907-08	1906-07	1905-06	1904-05	1903-04	1902-03	1901-02	1900-01	1899-00	1898-99	1897-98	1896-97	1895-96	1894-95	1893-94	1892-93	1891-92	1890-91	1889-90	1888-89	1887-88	1886-87	1885-86	1884-85	1883-84	1882-83	1881-82	1880-81	1879-80	1878-79	1877-78	1876-77	1875-76	1874-75	1873-74	1872-73	1871-72	1870-71	1869-70	1868-69	1867-68	1866-67	1865-66	1864-65	1863-64	1862-63	1861-62	1860-61	1859-60	1858-59	1857-58	1856-57	1855-56	1854-55	1853-54	1852-53	1851-52	1850-51	1849-50	1848-49	1847-48	1846-47	1845-46	1844-45	1843-44	1842-43	1841-42	1840-41	1839-40	1838-39	1837-38	1836-37	1835-36	1834-35	1833-34	1832-33	1831-32	1830-31	1829-30	1828-29	1827-28	1826-27	1825-26	1824-25	1823-24	1822-23	1821-22	1820-21	1819-20	1818-19	1817-18	1816-17	1815-16	1814-15	1813-14	1812-13	1811-12	1810-11	1809-10	1808-09	1807-08	1806-07	1805-06	1804-05	1803-04	1802-03	1801-02	1800-01	1799-00	1798-99	1797-98	1796-97	1795-96	1794-95	1793-94	1792-93	1791-92	1790-91	1789-90	1788-89	1787-88	1786-87	1785-86	1784-85	1783-84	1782-83	1781-82	1780-81	1779-80	1778-79	1777-78	1776-77	1775-76	1774-75	1773-74	1772-73	1771-72	1770-71	1769-70	1768-69	1767-68	1766-67	1765-66	1764-65	1763-64	1762-63	1761-62	1760-61	1759-60	1758-59	1757-58	1756-57	1755-56	1754-55	1753-54	1752-53	1751-52	1750-51	1749-50	1748-49	1747-48	1746-47	1745-46	1744-45	1743-44	1742-43	1741-42	1740-41	1739-40	1738-39	1737-38	1736-37	1735-36	1734-35	1733-34	1732-33	1731-32	1730-31	1729-30	1728-29	1727-28	1726-27	1725-26	1724-25	1723-24	1722-23	1721-22	1720-21	1719-20	1718-19	1717-18	1716-17	1715-16	1714-15	1713-14	1712-13	1711-12	1710-11	1709-10	1708-09	1707-08	1706-07	1705-06	1704-05	1703-04	1702-03	1701-02	1700-01	1699-00	1698-99	1697-98	1696-97	1695-96	1694-95	1693-94	1692-93	1691-92	1690-91	1689-90	1688-89	1687-88	1686-87	1685-86	1684-85	1683-84	1682-83	1681-82	1680-81	1679-80	1678-79	1677-78	1676-77	1675-76	1674-75	1673-74	1672-73	1671-72	1670-71	1669-70	1668-69	1667-68
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By PAUL DURMAN

At 36, Mr Bonfield will be one of the youngest finance directors of a FTSE 100 company and, at 6'3", one of the tallest. He could be paid as much as £300,000, though his salary is yet to be decided.

Although Mr Bonfield is already deputy finance director, Mr Collum, 58, said he was appointed only after an extensive search by Spencer Stuart. Because of the

Mr Bonfield has worked with SB since 1989, when he was one of the accountants seconded from Price Waterhouse to work on Becham's merger with SmithKline Beckman. Two years later he became SB's youngest vice-president to date.

Mr Collum will remain involved with the pharmaceutical sector through Chiroscience, where he takes over as chairman next month. He is also about to join the board of Siebe, the engineering group. He is a director of M&G Group, Salfway and Whitehead Mann, and will be looking for "one or two other things" to keep him from the garden.

0171-782 7344

LEGAL NOTICES

WOODHOPE'S LIMITED
Registered Number 1500229,
Incorporated in England. Nature
of Business: Retailer of Furniture.
Trends Classification: 19, Date of
Information: 1998, Date of
advisement: 4th September 1998,
Number of persons appearing the Ad-
ministrative Record: 1, Nature of
Bank F.I.C. Type of Security: De-
bitors, Date of Security: 21/9/98.

Names of person appointed: L.A. Manning and G.P. Swales both of
Woodhopes Limited, 100, 102, 104, 106
St. James Street, London SW20 9DQ (Office
holder Number 1500229).

WOLFEHARTS LIMITED
Registered Number 1721469, Nature
of Business: Retailer and Main-
tenance of Motor Vehicles.
Suppliers: Trends Classification: 28,
Date of appointment of Adminal-
istrative Record: 1998, Date of
advisement: 1998, Number of persons
appearing the Administrative Record: 2,
Nature of Bank F.I.C. Type of Security: L Cash
(Office holder Number NW 5930 and
BAG27) both of Mander Shipman
and Partners, 100, 102, 104, 106
St. James Street.

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BAG27)
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and
Partners,
100,
102,
104,
106
St. James
Street.

Director of Appointments
Administrative Services
and Engineering Limited
and resident; GPO#0486-
and resident; GPO#0486-
names Bureau Engineer-
of Business LPA emphasis
notification 46
appointment of Adminis-
tration 2 September

person appointing the Ad-
ministrative Services or Vege-
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John Administrative Ser-
vices holder no(4)
GPO#0486-
no(4) & Baker Street, Lon-
don N1A.
residential building, 49 South-
end Road, Hamp-
stead, London
N4 1BE

[illegible]

PUBLIC NOTICES

BALL, Kenneth George Ball son of
Thames, Somerset died there on
25 December 1997 (Aston age
85,000)

BEAY see Wheeler, Gwendolyn
Edna Mary see Wheeler, Widow
Mrs Mary, Kent died at Canterbury,
Kent on 22 June 1998 (Aston age
CT 40,000)

BOLMER, Joseph Odley Bolmer
cousin Joseph Bolmer late of Sand-
ford, West Yorkshire died there on
20 October 1997 (Aston age
87,000)

CHROMYON, John Sydney Chromy-
on late of Chislehurst, London WD
died there on 15 February 1998
(Aston age 85,000)

HEINITY, Ernest Albert Henty son of
Walsworth, London E12 7JF died there
on 31 January 1991 (Aston age

PUBLIC NOTICES

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The Secretary of State hereby gives notice as follows:

1. He proposes to grant licences under the Telecommunications Act 1984 ("the Act") to Belgacom UK Limited, Cyberlight Europe plc, Alpha Telecom Limited, MFPNAC Limited, Level 3 Communications Limited, NTT Europe Limited, Call-Net (UK) Limited and Zereau Limited, ("the Licensees") to run telecommunication systems in the United Kingdom. The Licences will be for a period of six months, thereafter being subject to revocation on one month's notice.
2. The principal effect of each licence will be to enable each Licensee to install and run telecommunication systems in the United Kingdom which may be connected to telecommunication systems outside the United Kingdom, and to provide a wide range of services but not any domestic services (i.e. services involving the conveyance of messages which originate and are subsequently to terminate in the United Kingdom or mobile radio services. Each licence authorises connection to a wide range of other systems, including earth orbiting apparatus.
3. Each licence will be subject to conditions such that section 8 of the Act will apply to it, thereby making each of the systems run under each licence eligible for designation as a public telecommunication system under section 9 of the Act. It is the intention of the Secretary of State to designate each of the Licensees' systems as a public telecommunication system.
4. The Secretary of State proposes to grant each licence in response to an application from each Licensee for such a licence because he considers that it will help to satisfy demands in the United Kingdom for the provision of services of the type authorised, will promote the interests of consumers in respect of the quality and variety of such services, and will maintain and promote effective competition between those engaged in the provision of telecommunication services.
5. He proposes to apply the telecommunications code ("the Code") to Level 3 Communications Limited and Zereau Limited subject to certain exceptions and conditions throughout the United Kingdom. The effect of the exceptions and conditions to the application of the Code is that the Licensee will have duties:
 - (a) to comply with various safety and environmental conditions, in particular (with certain exceptions) to install lines underground or only on such above-ground apparatus as is already installed for any purpose;
 - (b) to comply with conditions designed to ensure efficiency and economy on the part of the Licensee, in connection with the execution of works on land concerning the installation, maintenance, repair or alteration of its apparatus;
 - (c) to consult certain public bodies before exercising particular powers under the Code. Including the local planning and highway authorities and English Nature, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Countryside Council for Wales, the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland, as well as relevant electricity suppliers;
 - (d) to keep and make available records of the location of underground apparatus and copies of the exceptions and conditions in its licence to its powers under the Code; and
 - (e) to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet certain liabilities arising from the execution of street works.
6. The reason why the Secretary of State proposes to apply the Code to Level 3 Communications Limited and Zereau Limited is that it will mean the statutory powers in the Code to install and maintain the telecommunication systems which are to be installed and run under its proposed licence.
7. The reasons why it is proposed that the Code as applied should have effect subject to the exceptions and conditions referred to above are that they are considered requisite or expedient for the purpose of securing that the physical environment is protected, that there is no greater damage to land than necessary, that the systems are installed as safely and economically as possible, and that the Licensee to whom the Code is applied can meet (and relevant persons can enforce) liabilities arising from the execution of works.
8. Representations or objections may be made in respect of the proposed licences, the application of the Code to Level 3 Communications Limited and Zereau Limited and the proposed exceptions and conditions referred to above. They should be made in writing by 12 October 1998 and addressed to the undersigned at the Department of Trade and Industry, Communications and Information Industries Directorate, 2/4 Grey, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SS. Copies of the proposed licences can be freely obtained by writing to the Department or by calling 0171 215 1756.

Anthony J. Eden-Brown
Department of Trade and Industry

11 September 1998

PUBLIC NOTICES

[illegible]

LEGAL NOTICES

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
Registrar's Office
Michael Tierney Building
Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland

**SUPPLY OF A NEW IDENTITY CARD
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Proposals addressed to the Registrar, University College Dublin, and receivable up to 5.00pm on Friday 23 October 1998 are invited for the supply of a new Identity Card Management System in accordance with specifications and conditions of

Proposals must be

hardware and software solutions already in operation in large organisations and, more desirably, the third level education sector. Suppliers should state clearly where their proposal varies from their standard software.

The award criteria will be the most economically advantageous tender in terms of price, quality and proven track record.

A "Request for proposals" document may be obtained from Ms Nora Murphy, Registrar's Office, at the above address, telephone (353 1) 706 1944. The final date for request of documents is Friday 25 September 1999.

It will be a condition for the award of the contract that a firm must be able to produce promptly a Tax Clearance Certificate (resident tenderers) or a statement of suitability on Tax Clearance grounds from the Revenue Commissioners (non-resident tenderers).

UCD is not obliged to accept the lowest or any tender. UCD also reserves the right to select a tender in full or in part.

University College Dublin - National University of Ireland, Dublin



POP
Shock rock
returns with
Marilyn Manson
PAGE 37

THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE
Diana Rigg's
magnificent
Greek passion
PAGE 38



As the late John Lennon so memorably put it: "I read the news today, oh boy." And which stories caught my eye this week? More and more British people, it seems, are taking pills to counter bouts of depression. And the Royal Opera House is in turmoil again. Are these matters connected? You have to wonder. For anyone who loves opera, the Covent Garden affair has been a depressing saga. What did they once say about the British? Something about our genius for compromise? Our gift for finding pragmatic solutions to knotty dilemmas? That we make the world's best diplomats? Ah, nostalgic compliments! The recent history of Covent Garden suggests that at present we couldn't negotiate our way out of a paper bag. And this week's spectacle — Covent Garden's management and unions engaging in a series of public headbutts, like dinosaurs oblivious to imminent extinction — deepens the despair. Pass me those big pink pills, nurse. I feel a severe bout of *operatic gloom* coming on.

Time's up in the last-chance Crush Bar

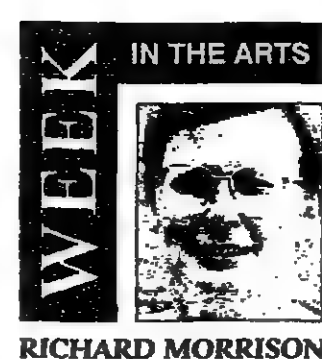
On Wednesday Sir Colin Southgate, the chairman of the opera house, announced his "radical plan" to save Covent Garden. It's quite a piece of work. In a nutshell, everyone gets sacked; only those who promise to work harder for less money get rehired; next year's opera programme is written off as a dead loss; the new studio theatre is declared null and void even before it opens its doors; the performance schedule for the redeveloped opera house is cut by a third; and taxpayers end up forking out more subsidy for fewer performances. On the other hand, ticket prices will come down, and that's what everyone said they wanted.

You can understand the anger of Covent Garden's workforce. For a man who says that he has inherited "an outdated culture of confrontational industrial relations", Southgate seems to have concocted a pretty good imitation of an old-

fashioned lockout to solve his problems. If he doesn't think his own plan is "confrontational" he should spend the weekend wandering around incognito, like Henry V before Agincourt, among his horny-handed stagehands.

But what the stage crews think is neither here nor there. Southgate says that without drastic action the opera house simply won't reopen. He is trying to "do a Wapping", make a clean break from past managerial weakness and incompetence, and start afresh in a new building with new equipment and a newly motivated workforce.

And, as with Wapping, the Government seems openly delighted to see union power smashed. Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, tells Southgate in an open letter this week that "your plans for reforming the ROH are wholly consistent with (government) aims", and that Covent Garden can therefore expect "substantial additional funding". The only slight surprise is that this is a Labour Government. Funny old world, innit?



RICHARD MORRISON

That's one irony of the Covent Garden upheaval. Another is that, having squealed indignantly at Smith's infamous suggestion last year — that English National Op-

era share the reopened Covent Garden with the Royal Opera and Ballet — on the ground that this would greatly reduce the total number of performances in London, the opera house has now been forced to cut the shows anyway. The truth is that, whichever way you slice the subsidy, there isn't enough to support two large-scale opera companies in London. Never has been, never will be.

Of course Covent Garden regularly gets "saved" by bold executive action. It seems like only last winter, and indeed it was, that Mary Allen was telling *The Times* how her cool head and firm hand had averted financial disaster and established a proper business plan for Covent Garden. I remember the article well, because our regrettably unpropitious headline was "A fine mess, but we'll fix it".

Now Ms Fixit has gone and Sir Colin Fixit has arrived but the fine mess remains obstinately unfixed. The difference this time, however, is that the opera house managers and its 500 workers (500! And it used to be 900) really are drinking in the last-chance Crush Bar.

Yes, it is inconceivable that the redeveloped Covent Garden won't open in December 1999. The public, which overwhelmingly resented donating £78 million of lottery money to the redevelopment in the first place, would be scandalised if the new Covent Garden stood empty and purposeless.

But if the Royal Opera's management and unions can't sit down like the reasonable, cultured people they are alleged to be, and thrash out an agreement that opens up the new Covent Garden to new audiences and frequent television transmissions, there is a very fine opera company just down

the road that would surely be delighted to swap its crumbling, near unworkable old theatre for pristine state-of-the-art premises. Its name is English National Opera.

With its inspiring young music director, Paul Daniel, its brilliant outreach programme, its affordable ticket prices, its imaginative production style and its loyal audience that cuts right across the class and age barriers which bedevil the Royal Opera, ENO would turn the new Covent Garden into a marvelously vibrant place.

I'm kidding, aren't I? Not entirely. The fact is that London has already learnt to live quite cheerfully without a resident Royal Opera, and next year the company won't exist in any shape at all. Indispensable it ain't. Nobody at Covent Garden should forget that, especially during these next crucial weeks. Cut out the fake outrage and macho posturing, guys; get down to hard talking; and turn the new Covent Garden into an opera house that makes Britain proud to own it. Use it or lose it. The years of living outrageously are over.

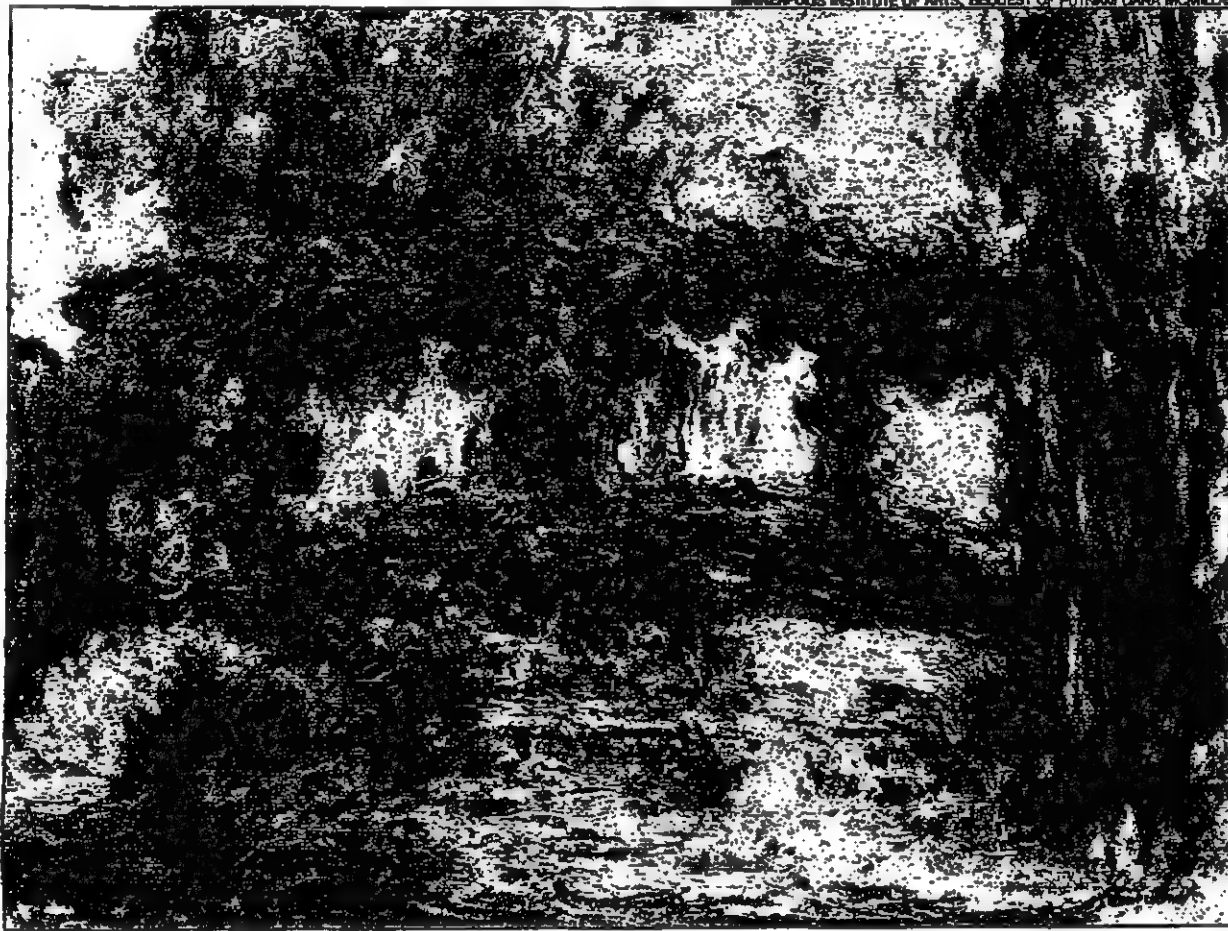
MONET OF THE DAY

Each day this week Richard Cork selects paintings from the forthcoming Royal Academy show

The Japanese Bridge, c.1919-24. PROBABLY completed within two years of Monet's death, this seismic work shows how unflinching the octogenarian artist had become. The entire surface of the canvas is alive with restless, flickering marks. Assailed by cataract problems Monet nevertheless persisted in returning time and again to his beloved lily pond.

Bridge, flowers and foliage are, however, hard to identify within the welter of organic brushstrokes. The forms have dissolved into a web of colour, conveying above all the obsessive intensity of the old man's response to nature. The emotional impact of this visionary canvas is complex, encompassing Monet's rage at the imminence of death as well as his perpetual ecstasy in front of the *lily pond* he cherished.

● Times readers have priority booking for the Royal Academy's *Monet in the 20th Century* show (Jan 23-April 19), sponsored by Ernst & Young. Telephone Firstcall (0870 842 2200, booking fee £1.80 per ticket on first five tickets: £1.40 thereafter)



Elegy for a daughter

JUST as the Austrian composer Franz Schmidt was getting into his stride, the time was turning seriously out of joint. The 1938 premiere of his last great work, the oratorio *The Book of the Seven Seals*, was turned into a National Socialist event, and his reputation took decades to recover. Indeed, it wasn't until Wednesday that his Fourth and last symphony, written in 1932-33, made its Proms debut.

This was music which was certainly far too conservative to be snared as *Entartete*, or degenerate. So Schmidt missed out on that unique selling point, too. But the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and its conductor Yakov Kreizberg made a convincing enough case for the rehabilitation of this elegiac, single-span work in which a direct personal voice speaks through the ardently assimilated language of Brahms and Bruckner. Not without cause has this work been considered the final masterpiece of the Austro-German symphonic tradition. It wears that mantle lightly.

PROMS
Bournemouth SO/
Kreizberg
Albert Hall/Radio 3

The symphony's guiding spirit seems to be that of Schmidt's beloved only daughter, who died in childhood as he began to write the score. Its centre of gravity is the climax of a massive funeral march which acts as the Adagio, and which was so powerfully built and sustained by Kreizberg. This is approached by an opening sturdily and conventionally enough of form and harmony, but disconcerting in its use of a solo trumpet to announce a long, subtly chromatic source idea. The cello is an equally eloquent solo voice.

The trumpet ends the work too. Its theme has meanwhile been elaborated in long passages of melody, sometimes counterpointed, sometimes abruptly truncated, sometimes engulfed. Quietly distanced

from the musical ferment of its time, Schmidt's music makes for thought-provoking listening, especially in a performance as committed as this.

The Schmidt symphony brought a degree of ballast to the evening. The first half had been dominated by the Russian pianist Arcadi Volodos, whose presence had doubtless filled the Albert Hall. After his debut disc, his Wigmore recital and his Rachmaninov Two at last year's Proms, expectations were high. But his Rachmaninov Third Piano Concerto was a disappointment.

There were beguiling moments: the suspended whispering of the opening, the hard, bright light of the left hand as it led the orchestra in the Intermezzo's clear song. Volodos's technical security and exuberant colour sense carry him through a good many notes. But that's not enough. Volodos seemed to be on a helter-skelter of monomaniacal virtuosity, and woe betide any instrument which got in his way.

HILARY FINCH

The sparklers that Pablo left out

GALLERIES: A jewellery exhibition draws its inspiration from Picasso's portraits of women. Simon Tait reports

Nobody painted women like Picasso did. But then, no painter had worn-en to paint like Picasso had — all beautiful but each strikingly different in looks and personality. One thing these mistresses, wives and friends have in common, though, is that apart from occasional hats their beauty is undisturbed. Any clothes were simple: there might be a hair ribbon or a humble string of beads, but seldom anything that could be described as decoration.

Wendy Ramshaw, the leading British artist-jeweller, used this as inspiration for Picasso's *Ladies*: 66 pieces which are now being shown at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is the largest ever display of a living jewellery designer's work at the museum.

"I'd always loved the Picasso women," Ramshaw says. This project began at the Museum of Modern Art during a trip to New York. "I bought a bundle of postcards of the portraits, and I thought I could design from them. It wasn't that I thought the pictures weren't finished, or that I wanted to embellish them: it was an inspiration to make something of my own." It turned into a ten-year odyssey during which she has changed her scale of work, her style, and also survived cancer — an experience which has influenced this collection.

Picasso's most famous models from the late 1920s to the early 1950s, and some from earlier, are represented here: Marie-Thérèse Walter, Dora Maar, Nusch Eluard, Françoise Gilot, Jacqueline Roque. There is even Gertrude Stein from the earlier portrait in which she wears a tiny red brooch. It inspired Ramshaw to make five silver bracelets with curves punctuated by tiny golden balls.

There is Sylvette, the pony-tailed girl in the 1954 *Portrait of a Young Woman*, whose

profile created a look for the 1950s, later made flesh by Brigitte Bardot and Françoise Hardy. "At first I thought earrings would be the answer to this particular portrait, with its elongated neck, and I made a series of drawings," Ramshaw says. "But the wonderful heavy head of hair made me decide on a series of combs in silver, purple, red and blue stones such as amethyst, lapis lazuli and garnet to pick up and complement the colours of the portrait."

And there is even a piece

"I bought postcards and I thought I could design from them"

drawn from the controversial and fascinating early series *Les Femmes d'Alger*. In a study for the 1907 paintings Ramshaw found reference to Picasso's interest in African art. She made a black necklace of Perspex beads with silver gilt inlays. "This is the primitive versus the modern for me," Ramshaw says. The most striking exhibit is the brooches of coloured tears for one of the most familiar Picasso images of Dora Maar, the *Weeping Woman*. "In terms of a painting with such radiance and colour, it is hard to think of jewellery as anything but joyous," she says. She had a series of brilliantly coloured stones cut and then turned them into a group of drop-shaped stones which developed into two large, cascading brooches.

The piece represents a new phase for Ramshaw. Since the start of the project her work has developed into the larger

scale. She has designed gates for St John's College, Oxford, a huge screen for the V&A, and murals and sculptures for two passenger liners.

The contrast of size continues to interest her. "On the large scale," she says, "the work is something that involves a large number of people at different levels at the same time, so it's the very opposite of jewellery, which is a one-to-one relationship. You don't lose the body relationship, but it's reversed because the body relates to the large object which creates its own context, while the small object relates to the body."

Three years ago Ramshaw contracted breast cancer, which has responded to treatment so far, but casts a perpetual shadow. She says the experience gives one a reason to be brave in other areas of life. It is an experience which helped her to make the *Weeping Woman* brooches.

"The composition is disorganised, but I've got balance by contrasting the stones against each other. There is a moment of movement frozen in the painting, an instant of anguish which I wouldn't have had the courage to work with when the project started. It's a waterfall of tears."

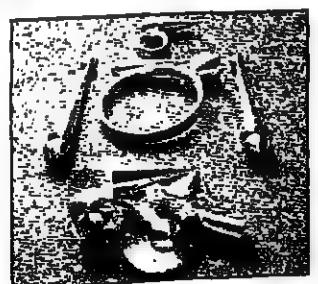
Even in the large scale, the signature geometric order and linear patterns which draw the eye in her jewellery are unmistakably present, but in the later Picasso jewellery there is an unfamiliar abandon, a new freedom of movement.

"The early works in the collection are very recognisably mine, but as you get on you lose touch with the familiar, and that is because I have used a lot of the old language up," she says. "As an artist you have to expand the language you've got because you can't make a new one, and that's what you can see here."

● Picasso's *Ladies*: Jewellery by Wendy Ramshaw is at the Victoria and Albert until February 15



Semi-precious stones: the set of 19 rings for *Nude Woman in a Red Armchair*



Geometric: the set of jewellery for *Nude Sitting Against Green Background*



Glass tears: a necklace inspired by Picasso's *Woman with a Handkerchief*



An 18ct gold with precious stones necklace created for the *Girl in a Chemise*

WHO KNEW DECEPTION, TREACHERY AND REVENGE COULD BE THIS MUCH FUN.

"A Feast for the Eyes"
PREMIERE

"A Sumptuous Dish of Exquisite Malice... Lange is Outstanding... Delicious."★★★★
EMPIRE

"Savage Fun, Wickedly Comic"
TIME



STARTS TODAY AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

POP OPINION

It's cool to be coy

ARTS

POP FEATURE
Gram Parsons recalled

Between rock and a dark Hole

Courtney Love could learn a thing or two about infamy from Belle & Sebastian, Caitlin Moran suggests

Records spent more than \$1 million on the Hole comeback album — a big, brash, wonderful Hollywood thing, designed to be sold only in its millions. Unfortunately, the first single from it went in at a very poor No 19 on Sunday.

On Monday, Belle & Sebastian — an underground Glaswegian eight-piece so fey that they have recorder solos — played one of the most astonishing gigs I've ever seen, and nearly provoked a riot.

Both bands have that real, magical liquid genius about them, which is unstoppable and undeniable, and freezes the breath in your body. However, it's quite likely you don't know about this, as they simply don't deal with the press. In Belle & Sebastian's case, this means no photo shoots, no interviews, the guy from *The New York Times* was stood up in a Glasgow pub in 1996. One magazine was promised an exclusive first ever photo shoot with them last year — and ended up with a picture of one of the band's mates doing the ironing.

Belle & Sebastian simply don't care about being famous: they sell enough records and T-shirts to pay the rent and everything else is just yellowing scrapbooks full of misquotes in the end.

Hole, on the other hand,

have waved around so many contracts and conditions that the campaign for their current comeback album consists of a buried feature in a broadsheet and a brief interview with *The Big Issue*.

Interviewers have to agree not to ask questions about Kurt Cobain, Nick Broomfield's *Kurt and Courtney* documentary, Love's father and "any half-truths/rumours" regarding the band. Hole also placed restrictions on their TV and radio interviews, causing a very bad-humoured three minutes on *The O-Zone*, and a last-minute cancellation of their *ITV Friday* appearance.

Most of the British media are roundly hacked off with the band, and in the absence of an interview have filled space with exasperated comments on Love's Hollywood spin-doctoring. What should have been a glittering comeback has turned into a rather sour debate on freedom of speech. This is probably why the Hole single stalled and the album is predicted to go in at a very icky No 10 on Sunday. If you're selective about your publicity, you only get a selective audience, and no one ever bought a big pink Jaguar on selective audience sales.

Belle & Sebastian's blanket refusal is the far more successful tack. By deciding they didn't want to be questioned from the outset (and it's impor-



Here are Belle & Sebastian. This is strange, because there are three people in the picture — and as many as eight in the group Belle & Sebastian

tant to remember that musicians don't have to be questioned — they're not politicians or monopolists, they've built up a relationship with their audience that's pretty

unique in the 1990s. At their sweltering Shepherd's Bush Empire gig on Monday, they took to the stage an hour late and walked into a wall of piqued devotees booing.

As the gig progressed, and they unfolded each of their Fabergé clockwork miracles, the audience divided into those who forgave the band for their lateness and those

who continued to heckle. These factions then started on each other. The theatres turned into a yelping 3-D debating-chamber — kids on the floor heckled those hanging

from the balconies; those at the back heckled those at the front, and those in the middle passed on insults from both sides. It was genuinely thrilling: being able to watch pop

music become interactive and passionate again, even for one evening, is rather like finding gold on Mars.

As Belle & Sebastian ended their gig with five seconds of stunned silence, followed by a roar that had the people in the balconies vibrating, the woman next to me bemoaned the band's reluctance to do interviews. "Do you think it's that they're shy?" she wondered. I doubt it: a band that can play recorder solos through a near-riot have trousers bulging with contents the Prodigy can only dream of. I rather think it's that they know this the main thing about press is being seen to be successful, and when you know you are, it becomes kind of unnecessary.

The real tragedy of the botched Hole album launch is that Courtney Love, for all her Amazon Hollywood diva-ing, still sees herself as musically unsuccessful. She wants to be vindicated, and by the same UK press she used to devour as a teenager.

So withdrawing from the media entirely, à la Belle & Sebastian, isn't an option for her — but then neither is answering a dozen unwelcome questions. And as Love, famously, wants to "be the girl with the most cake", the only option she has left is trying to have her cake, and contractually ensuring that she can also eat it at a later date.

Both Hole's *Celebrity Skin* (Capitol) and Belle & Sebastian's *The Boy With The Arab Strap* (Jeepster Records) albums are out now

The cosmic cowboy

Too subversive to be country, too safe-home to be rock, Gram Parsons was the missing link between Hank Williams and the Rolling Stones — a cosmic cowboy with a rock'n'roll heart.

"Gram redefined the possibilities of country music for me," Keith Richards told Parsons' biographer, Ben Fong-Torres. "If he had lived he probably would have redefined it for everybody."

Parsons was pronounced dead at 12.30am on September 19, 1973, following a drug overdose in the Joshua Tree Inn in the Californian desert. He was 47 days short of his 27th birthday. A quarter of a century later, people are still exploring the possibilities of the soul-country-blues Parsons termed Cosmic American Music.

His long-time champions include Emmylou Harris, Elvis Costello, Tom Petty, REM, P-Model and Evan Dando.

Ann Scanlon
pays tribute to
the myth and
memory of
Gram Parsons

but his influence is evident in everything from alternative country to Beck and the Verve. "I spent a lot of time listening to Parsons in the early hours of the morning," says the Verve's Richard Ashcroft. "His version of *Love Hurts* is a classic example of how great country music can be — it's very simple, but you can't deny how you feel when you've heard it."

The impenetrable sadness that runs through Parsons' music can be traced back to a rich Southern childhood that

was straight out of Tennessee Williams. Born Ingram Cecil Connor III, he inherited vast wealth from his mother and deep melancholy from his father, who shot himself when Gram was just 12. His mother remarried a salesman called Bob Parsons before drinking herself to death.

The teenage Parsons found comfort in country music. After a brief stint in the Byrds — long enough to record the album *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo* — he became friends with Keith Richards and dreamt of forming a country version of the Rolling Stones. He came close when the Flying Burrito Brothers recorded *The Gilded Palace Of Sin* in 1969.

On tour, Parsons' cracked, fragile voice — which wavered even more when fuelled by drink and drugs — regularly reduced people to tears. "It's simply a way of saying, 'Find a way to love,'" Parsons said of the Burritos' sound. "It's goosebump music."

However, disillusioned by lack of success, Parsons went

They quote me here, they quote me there

Jack Dangers is the man everyone wants to sample. Lisa Verrico meets Mr Meat Beat Manifesto

Jack Dangers should be bitter. The Swindon-born, San Francisco-based musician has been sampled by the cream of the UK dance scene for over a decade, yet his name is barely known even in clubland. While the Prodigy, Chemical Brothers, Fatboy Slim and Future Sound Of London have all made big money from hit singles based on snippets of his songs, he has not received a penny of the profits. Moreover, although it was Dangers who taught his peers how to turn experimental, electronic music into commercial pop, his own band, Meat Beat Manifesto, has never been in the British charts.

According to the 34-year-old techno pioneer, however, neither recognition nor a healthy bank balance have ever been important. Influenced by the likes of Kraftwerk, Can, John Cale and Sheffield's industrial noise merchants Cabaret Voltaire, Dangers claims not to care that a new generation of dance acts is currently claiming credit for the sample-based, big beat sound which he almost certainly invented.

"My aim has always been to inspire others," says Dangers, a shy, softly spoken, balding man, who stoops when he walks, as if to counter his skinny, 6'2" frame. "If my songs can make someone check out a few of my own favourite albums, I'm happy. When I first heard Cabaret Voltaire, a new world of music opened up to me. Because I was fascinated with that band, I decided to investigate their influences, which introduced me to the likes of Kraftwerk, Stockhausen, Xenakis and Cage."

The first band to make a mark on Dangers was Swindon's XTC. Having just left school aged 16, he was offered a job as a tea boy in his hometown's sole recording studio.

At the time, XTC, whose singer Andy Partridge had grown up almost next door to Dangers, was rehearsing for what was to prove the band's final, ill-fated tour. "I think only a couple of those shows actually happened," says Dangers. "Andy had some sort of breakdown and the band split up. I was fortunate to witness what they were like live near the end. After seeing that, I knew I had to work in music."

A year later Dangers started writing his own songs under the name Meat Beat Manifesto, although it was not until he was in his mid twenties that his influence on the British dance scene began to be felt. The turning point was a dub-heavy, breakbeat track titled *Radio Babylon*. Released in 1987, the seminal song had the hard drum sound and dense production style of American hip hop acts such as

Public Enemy and Eric B and Rakim. Out of step with the then fashion for sparser house and techno, *Radio Babylon* was initially ignored. In the early 1990s, however, a teenage Liam Howlett fell for the track. Howlett, who had formed the Prodigy the previous year, contacted Dangers to remix a track from his debut EP, *What*

Evil Lurks. "Liam sent me a letter and a load of demo tapes," recalls Dangers. "I don't remember what I thought of them, but I didn't do the remix because I was too busy on tour. A few months later I was walking down the street in Swindon when I heard one of my beats playing on a ghetto blaster. It was my beat all right, but it wasn't my song."

In fact, what Dangers heard was *Charly*, the childlike rave tune which launched the Prodigy's career in spectacular style by entering the UK charts at No 2. He even bought the single just to be sure that it was based on *Radio Babylon*. Then he did nothing, despite



"I have never sued anyone for sampling my records without asking," says Jack Dangers

the fact that he had neither been asked his permission nor was due to benefit financially from the song's success.

"I have never sued anyone for sampling my records without asking," says Dangers. "It's not in my nature. I know this sounds ridiculous, but I don't want to be seen as some money-grabbing musician. It doesn't even annoy me. Nor do I feel flattered by it. What I do get is a sense of achievement. I give myself a quick pat on the back, then return to what I was doing. It also keeps me on my feet. I have to keep pushing music on so that I'm always one step ahead."

Shortly after *Charly* was a hit, a nascent Future Sound Of London also broke into the pop charts with the help of *Radio Babylon*. By chance, Dangers turned on his TV to see a *Top Of The Pops* performance of the electronic outfit's only big hit, *Papua New Guinea*.

"That track was 50 per cent mine," says Dangers. "But when my publisher tried to persuade me to sue, I decided that it sampled my song. I didn't mind, although I was angry when the band paid a dozen DJs to do remixes, but never bothered to ask me."

Subsequently, dozens of successful dance artists have freely borrowed from Meat Beat Manifesto's back catalogue, which contains six albums worth of varied music, ranging from hardcore breakbeat to jazz and ambient. In recent months, Dangers has remixed the likes of Fun Lovin' Criminals and Public Enemy, begun work with the Orb and supported the Prodigy on a stadium tour of the United States. On Monday, Meat

Beat Manifesto releases its seventh album, *Actual Sounds + Voices*. A difficult, occasionally inaccessible, but always intriguing collection of densely produced songs, it was culled from more than 60 hours of studio sessions.

Unfortunately, *Actual Sounds + Voices* is unlikely to bring Dangers the commercial success he deserves. Remaining underground, however, means he can continue to get away with sampling some

of his all-time favourite artists without paying royalties. "I have been sued only once. It was for using a jazz break from a 1950s Blue Note classic by Horace Silver. I see sampling as the aural equivalent of pop art. It involves taking something that already exists, then altering it to create a new product. Sadly, few people share my opinions on sampling. The worst part of releasing records is waiting for the phone calls from my lawyer."

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE BELOW

ALAN CLARK FORUM

Alan Clark, the Tory MP, historian and celebrated diarist, will be speaking on his new book, *The Tories: Conservatives and the Nation State 1922-1997* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20) at a Times/Dillons Forum on Wednesday, September 23, 1998. The forum will be chaired by Peter Stothard, Editor of *The Times*, and there will be an opportunity to put questions to the former Minister.

The forum, the 50th in the Times/Dillons Forum series, will take place at 7.30pm at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1. The admission price of £10 (concessions £7.50 for students, pensioners and the unemployed on production of valid I.D.) includes a reduction of £2 on copies of *The Tories*.

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*Wednesday, September 23, 1998



Gram Parsons, who died 25 years ago this month

to Europe with the Stones. He showed them how to play country with feeling and introduced them to his pedal steel guitar. They returned the favour by letting him record *Wild Horses* before they did.

Bored with the Burritos, Parsons met an unknown singer called Emmylou Harris. They sang an impromptu duet and he knew that he had found the Tammy Wynette to his George Jones. With the help of Harris and Elvis Presley's band, Parsons recorded two extraordinary solo albums, *GP* and *Grievous Angel*.

But before the latter was released, he was dead. In order to carry out Parsons' wish to be cremated in the desert, his tour manager Phil Kaufman borrowed a hearse, stole the coffin, drove out to the Joshua Tree and set the body alight. It was the perfect finale.

A tribute to Gram Parsons takes place at the Garage, London, N5, on Sept 19. *Hickory Wind: The Life & Times Of Gram Parsons* by Ben Fong-Torres is published by St Martin's Press on Oct 13

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سكزا من الأهل

POP ALBUMS
Preachers' latest

Far more mainstream than manic

NEW POP ALBUMS: The eagerly awaited fifth release by Manic Street Preachers is formulaic, says David Sinclair

MANIC STREET PREACHERS
This Is My Truth Tell Me Yours

(Epic 4917036, £15.99)
THEY are revered as oracles of alternative pop wisdom despite their unreliable haircuts. But behind all the pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric, Manic Street Preachers have always peddled a fairly conservative musical formula, and never more so than on their fifth album *This Is My Truth Tell Me Yours*.

Defined by the orthodox arena-rock guitar sound of James Dean Bradfield and the heavy drum fills of Sean Moore, the album is given further mainstream polish by string arrangements on several tracks and the uplifting, anthemic choruses of numbers such as *The Everlasting* and *You Stole The Sun From My Heart*.

But while the music has a bold, grown-up air about it, the lyrics, written by bassist Nicky Wire, continue to flow from a seemingly bottomless well of teenage art-student angst. Mistaking polemic for poetry, Wire doesn't so much write verse as weave together slogans inspired by his frank-

ly hysterical musings on such pressing issues of concern as the Spanish Civil War (*If You Tolerate This Your Children Will Be Next*), the Hillsborough football stadium disaster (*South Yorkshire Mass Murderer*) and "Welsh self-destruction" (*Ready For Drowning*). Bradfield, the man charged with the job of actually singing such deeply unsexy lines as: "The subtext of this song/I've thought about it for so long" does his bit with commendable gusto. But there is such an air of weary narcissism pervading numbers such as *My Little Empire* ("I'm bored of being bored") and *Born A Girl* ("I wish I had been born a girl/And not this mess of a man") that you begin to wonder at what point the righteous anger of youth turns into the sanctimonious bluster of the professionally disaffected.

MARILYN MANSON
Mechanical Animals

(Nothing/Interscope INTD 90273, £15.99)
A SHOCK-ROCK huckster in the tradition of Alice Cooper, Marilyn Manson and his group of the same name can hardly be surprised that no one has taken their music very

seriously before now. Their fourth album, *Mechanical Animals*, is adorned with a provocative "nude" photograph of their avowedly Satanist leader, a 29-year-old man once known as Brian who now appears to have mutated into a red-eyed hermaphrodite eunuch.

But this time around Manson has attempted to put some musical flesh on the bones of his carefully contrived image, enlisting producer Michael Beinhorn, who is known for his work with the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Hole and Soundgarden.

The result is a collection of cartoon electro-glam-rock songs such as *Rock Is Dead* and *I Don't Like The Drugs*, that will sit comfortably on the shelf alongside those almost-forgotten albums by Babylon Zoo and Gary Numan. Heavily influenced by Ziggy Stardust-era David Bowie, numbers such as *Dissociative* and *Last Day On Earth* are steeped in predictable sci-fi imagery, while *User Friendly* comes garnished with strangely innocuous clusters of the F-word.

"I'm as fake as a wedding cake," Manson sings in *Model*, somewhat giving the game away, but banging on happily regardless.

STEPS
Step One (Jive 051912, £15.99)
"Life is always sunny in Stepsworld" according to the Steps press release, a document so relentlessly upbeat it would probably give Nicky Wire heart failure.

A five-piece group of fresh-faced girls and boys recruited by manager Tim Byrne via an



Manic Street Preachers: hailed as oracles of alternative pop wisdom, the band trade in pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric that masks conservative lyrics

advertisement in *The Stage*, and helped on their way by 1980s pop Svengali Pete Waterman. Steps have already demonstrated an eerie populist appeal with a string of hit singles — *5.6.7.8*, *Last Thing On My Mind* and *One For Sorrow* — all included here.

But it is interesting to note how much care and pride has gone into assembling the rest of their first album, *Step One*. A collection of infectious disco tunes and smoochy ballads, all very modern-sounding but influenced here and there by Abba, it is clearly destined for extended success in what is rapidly turning into a golden era of post-Spice pop.

MOTT THE HOOPLE
All The Young Dudes — The Anthology (Columbia 491 400: three discs, £35.99)

GARISH, loudish and lumpy, yet tremendously endearing, Mott The Hoople were the quintessential English rock'n'roll band of the

1970s. Their idea was to combine the swagger of the Rolling Stones with the poetic appeal of Bob Dylan, but in the end it was David Bowie who provided them with their biggest hit, *All The Young Dudes*, thereby inspiring them to advance, at quite a late stage in their career, beyond the

realms of pub-rock mediocrity. All the highs and more than enough of the lows are included on this painstakingly annotated and lavishly illustrated three-CD boxed set. The remastered hits, including *All The Way From Memphis*, *Roll Away The Stone* and the sub-

lime *Saturday Gigs*, sound wonderful, while the 37 "previously unreleased" tracks have a certain awful curiosity value. A book, *Mott The Hoople And Ian Hunter — The Biography* by Campbell Devine is published by Cherry Red to tie in with the anthology's release.



Guru of glam rock: Marilyn Manson's latest effort, *Mechanical Animals*, is destined to be quickly forgotten

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1 (1)	Where We Belong	Boyzone (Polydor)
2 (2)	Talk on Corners	Corn (Atlantic)
3 (3)	Savage Garden	Savage Garden (Columbia)
4 (4)	Blue	Simply Red (East West)
5 (5)	Tenacious D	Mike Rodden (WEA)
6 (6)	Life Goes On	Sash! (Mercury)
7 (7)	Life Through a Lens	Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
8 (8)	200% Colombian	Fun Lovin' Criminals (Chrysalis)
9 (9)	Six	Mansun (Parlophone)
10 (10)	One Night Only	Bee Gees (Polydor)

COPYRIGHT CIN • Figure in brackets indicates last week's position

Showcase for a new generation

DAMON BROWN
QUINTET

A Rhythm Indicative (Zah Zah ZCD 9806)
AS A showcase for a representative sample of the newly established generation in UK jazz, this album, led by trumpeter Damon Brown, is hard to beat.

In addition to his crisp, fleet trumpet it also features a superbly cohesive core band: the pleasantly gruff saxophonist/flautist Andy Parry, the witty, rambunctious pianist Gareth Williams and the superb rhythm team of bassist Geoff

Gascoyne and drummer Winston Clifford. With telling guest appearances from saxophonists Tim Garland and Jonathan Gee, and pianist Jonathan Gee, with a bag of original compositions ranging from sinuous blues and light funk to the brisk chases across neat, accommodating chord sequences favoured by hard bop, this is a highly auspicious debut from one of the UK's most versatile younger musicians.

JOHN PAITUCCI
Now (Concord Jazz CCD-4806-2)
LIKE his label-mate, saxophonist Chris Potter (who alternates on tenor with Michael Brecker on this album), bassist John Patitucci is not only a world-class side man — most famously with Chick Corea — but is also a fast-rising leader/composer in his own right. Eight of *Now's* ten tracks are from his pen, ranging from the gently insistent *Labour Day*

through the swirling *Espresso* to the reflective solo-bass threnody *Miya*, and his use of what he terms the extra sonic space resulting from the presence of John Scofield's guitar in place of the more conventional keyboard is particularly felicitous. With drummer Bill Stewart underpinning Patitucci's big, booming bass sound, and with almost an embarrassment of riches in the soloing department, this is top-flight 1990s jazz rich and subtle, vigorous and unfussily virtuosic.

CHRIS PARKER

Great ship and good music

BLUES ALBUMS

reissue of the album he cut for Capitol records in Hollywood in 1944, *Huddie Ledbetter's Best* (Bear Goes On BGCD403). With his 12-string guitar he powers his way through his best-known songs including *Goodnight Irene*, *Ella Speed*, *Take This Hammer* and *Rock Island Line*. What blues writer Tony Russell calls Leadbelly's "elemental power and emotion" is also evident on the two solo-piano tracks he recorded at the session. *The Eagle Rocks* and *Eagle Rock Rag* (basically the same number with vocals) recall, with their thunderously percussive rhythms, the music he played in

rural juke joints. Another blues legend, Big Bill Broonzy, has the cream of his prewar work collected on *Warm, Witty & Wise* (Columbia 489893 2). Although many of the tracks have been reissued before it's good to have classics like *Just A Dream*, *Southern Flood*, *I Can't Be Satisfied* and *Trucking Little Woman* available again from one of the most dextrous guitar pickers and expressive vocalists of the 1930s and 1940s. A decade or so later the home of deep soul music was undoubtedly Memphis Tennessee, and Stax Records' 5000 Volts of Stax (Stax CDSX 116) collects tracks cut during that era, but which have until now remained unissued. Rufus Thomas applies his gruff, gutbucket vocals to the Jimmie Taylor hit *Who's Makin' Love*, his daughter Carla faces the William Bell and Judy Clay number *My Baby Specializes*, and Detroit bluesmen Little Sonny tells us that *Things Ain't Kosh*. But the most poignant track is the instrumental *Sissy*, cut by the Bar-Kays in March 1967. Eight months later four of the six-string group would die in the plane crash that killed Otis Redding.

JOHN CLARKE

You've seen the movie, read the book — now listen to the songs. The sinking of *The Titanic* was a recurrent theme in blues and country music between the wars. The stock song, *It Was When That Great Ship Went Down*, *Sad When That Great Ship Went Down*, was recorded under many different titles and by a variety of artists, both black and white. Many of them can be heard on *Titanic Songs* (TSCD-22798), a CD companion to the book by Canadian archivist Joe Showler, which collects 15 songs recorded between 1928 and 1948 as well as three recorded by English singer Ernest Gray only a few months after the disaster in 1912. The selection ranges from the down-home blues of Blind Willie Johnson on *God Moves on the Water* to the more refined tones of country singer Vernon Dalhart who has four versions of *Great Ship* included. Leadbelly's 1948 song *The Titanic* is also memorable for the implausible but entertaining verse which has Captain Smith refusing on board, thereby saving his life. "I ain't hauling no coal," he tells him. (Available for \$20 from Joe Showler, 2483 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4E 1H9.) Leadbelly also features this month in a

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CHANGING TIMES

Montgomery points to *The Mirror's* coverage of the Swissair crash to illustrate what he means. *The Sun*, he points out, printed a colour full version of the last minute in the cockpit of the doomed plane when the paper couldn't have known what happened. *The Mirror* didn't. There has also been, Montgomery says, a fall in complaints about the paper. And recently when the editorial management heard there were allegations that a reporter had broken into a house in search of information the allegations were taken to the police. "There is a culture

the
media
interview

Montgomery says he loves his job and will stay on as long as the board and shareholders want him. He also says he is more proud of the *Mirror* titles than at any time in the past. "I am much happier with them today than I would have been five years ago and through my earlier career with Mirror Group," he says. "I felt they were too dependent on history and were living on their laurels. Now we have editors with minds of their own who want to change their papers and leave their stamp on them, and that modernising process is more fulfilling for everybody in the company."



● *Richard Russell is the writer and publisher of the independent monthly publication Sports Television: The Ever Changing Face*

Hard lesson when dog bites dog

Journalists do their jobs every day without any understanding of how their daily work will affect the lives of the subjects of their reports. As



PAPER ROUND

Simon Hoggart noted in *The Guardian* last week, to most of us — even those in the trade — news is something out there, something we look on through a glass screen. It is not often, therefore, that journalists find themselves on the other side of that glass screen and at the sharp and suffering end of the newspaper craft. Yet as Tim Hames, a leader writer on *The Times* and co-author of the Demos pamphlet *Modernising the Monarchy*, which made front page headlines on Sunday and Monday, discovered this week, it is hard work being the subject of a hot news story. A journalist quickly learns sharp lessons about the modern media industry when he becomes poacher turned gamekeeper and Hames is now a sadder and wiser man.

One of those lessons, now that there are so many national and local radio and TV stations and newspapers have grown so big, is the insatiable appetite of modern news editors. They need to fill all those hours with talk or all those empty editorial pages with new articles — and a controversial subject such as the Royal Family is manna from a news editor's heaven.

That was the hard work, even in the cause of self-promotion. On Monday, Hames's day started at the BBC's Radio Oxford at 6.30am, took in *The Jimmy Young Show*, and ended at 10.30pm with BBC Radio North. By the end of the day he had given nearly 50 interviews. He had also spoken to audiences in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Before

that he had written articles for *The Independent* on Sunday, *The Times* and *Newsweek*.

Another saddening lesson is that journalists rarely write the story that the subject had in mind — which is why experts often complain that when they read about their subject in newspapers, journalists always get it wrong. Space is always tight, which means that most reports will merely skim the contents of a political

'Hames was surprised by the spin the tabloids gave it — which was not the spin he wanted'

pamphlet, and journalists will also seek the angle on a story that will deliver the most arresting headline.

As a journalist himself, Hames knew the spin that he and co-author Mark Leonard wanted to put on the Demos pamphlet. They did not want the story to appear on the dead news day of Saturday. So they deliberately embargoed the report for Monday, meanwhile agreeing a scoop with *The Independent* on Sunday. It was a good deal for both parties. Hames and Leonard got 1,500 words to tell their own unedited story, most of another page was given over to an analysis of the pamphlet, and *The Inde-*

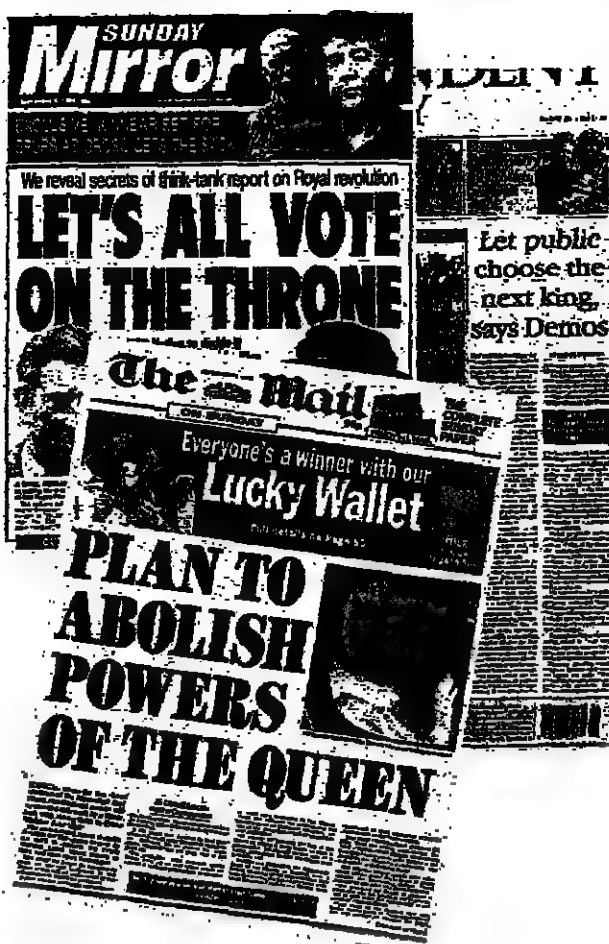
pendent on Sunday commissioned a MORI poll to flesh the story out. The *IoS* knew that it had a potential front page splash in the bag. Even professional spin-

doctors, however, find that journalists aren't lapdogs. So did Hames. He thought the best angle was MORI's finding that 60 per cent of the British thought the monarchy should be modernised — and that 49 per cent believed the Queen should relinquish her political role.

On the day, however, Kim Fletcher, Editor of the *IoS*, decided differently. Influenced by newspaper readers' complaints about the saturation coverage of the anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, only a week earlier, which had also included many opinion polls, he decided to splash on a report that doctors would not be allowed to prescribe Viagra on the NHS, instead of the Demos pamphlet. He then decided to lead Hames's story on the angle of a veto on the succession of Prince Charles instead of the opinion poll.

Hames was "flabbergasted". His response was to call *The Mail* on Sunday where he briefed political correspondent Chris McLaughlin, who was preparing a long article on the pamphlet. It was a successful stratagem. Hames was quoted comprehensively in the article published across two pages next morning and the paper led its front page on the story, as did the *Sunday Mirror*.

Hames was also surprised by the spin the tabloids gave to their stories — which was certainly not the spin that he had wanted. He is no left-wing radical but a Conservative. Yet all the tabloid reports said that "plans" for the "virtual abolition" of the monarchy had



Big splash: the reaction to Tim Hames's royal pamphlet

been unveiled by a think-tank "with strong links to Tony Blair".

It is difficult to fault the accuracy of such reports. They are both true and not quite true. Yes, Geoff Mulgan, the founder of Demos, works in Downing Street. But he did not write the report and Hames suspects he was even embarrassed by it. Yes, some Demos reports have been influential in the making of new Labour policy and, yes, Tony Blair probably sympathises with some of the pamphlet's milder recommendations. But the Prime Minister was almost certainly unaware of the pamphlet and Downing Street quickly distanced him from it.

Hames admits ruefully that he was perhaps naive to expect better but says nevertheless that some of the reporting was "flagrantly and knowingly dishonest" in its desperation to

convert the pamphlet into a new Labour enterprise.

Yes, whatever the distortions, the amount of coverage *Modernising the Monarchy* received was a remarkable tribute to the power of the political pamphlet. If the ideas espoused by Demos took root, said Polly Toynbee in *The Guardian*, historians may look back and mark its pamphlet as one of the stations on the road to abolition. The print order was only 500 but some of its main recommendations have now, thanks to newspapers, been read by millions.

Yet for Hames, the leader writer, the greatest joy of his five minutes of fame was being described by Toynbee as a "political theorist". His next pamphlet is being written for Politica on the British constitution. He will be lucky, he says, if that gets reported on page two of the *Financial Times*.

Money talks louder than loyal fans

BSkyB had a huge stroke of luck on Wednesday that had little to do with being able to announce a recommended £623.4 million offer for Manchester United.

The financial negotiations were tense and went into extra time as Greg Dyke, the club's non-executive director, managed to get an impressive result for the "Red Devils" by blocking the move until another £50 million or so was added to the purchase price.

Outplaying merchant bankers is one thing, getting a result on the pitch at Old Trafford quite another. If Charlton had beaten Manchester United in the Premiership match on Wednesday night the fans would have a lot more to boo about.

As Manchester United won 4-1, it can safely be predicted that Martin Edwards, the Manchester United chief executive, will now not be strung up by his supporters and, as long as the club manages to keep winning over the next few weeks, there will indeed be a new era in British football.

Some people see difficulties in my writing about BSkyB's bid because, as the rest of the media enjoys pointing out, *The Times* is owned by News International, which in turn owns 40 per cent of the satellite broadcaster. But it is very easy to gather together a few facts to set beside the emotion and hysteria.

An unnamed supporter put it well on Wednesday from the fans' point of view: "The romance that started with the Munich air crash [that killed several of the Busby Babes] ended tonight."

The comment seems at first sight to hold a sad truth: the Manchester United that was "owned" by the fans and is a natural expression of their hopes and fears is now just something to be snapped up by an international media empire with complex motives.

In fact, if money is the antithesis of romance, the romance died not this week but in 1991 when Manchester United was floated on the Stock Exchange and money started to talk loudly. From that moment, the main responsibility of directors was to represent the interests of shareholders rather than of fans, and they had a legal responsibility to agree to an offer that compares favourably with the less than £20 million the club was worth a decade ago.

The next criticism BSkyB faces is that it will either run the club into the ground and

extract more and more money from the supporters, or will invest too much money and make Manchester United too powerful in the League.

The first is much less likely than the latter. It is massively in the satellite company's interest for the club to be a winner, but it would also be financially damaging if the Premier League were to become the boring, predictable plaything of a few large clubs.

But would owning Manchester United give BSkyB a "stranglehold" on Premier League television rights as the conventional wisdom goes? It is difficult to see how this would work, despite Manchester United's obvious influence, because each of the 20 clubs has a single vote and there is no reason for them all to do one club's bidding.

The Office of Fair Trading should and will thoroughly investigate the deal — in particular the increased vertical integration involved. Manchester United, the BSkyB subsidiary, will be selling its football rights to its parent company. The claim that Manchester United will be free to decide to whom to sell its rights does not seem credible.

A condition of the deal going through should be that in Premier League negotiations on television rights Manchester United will be allowed to express its view but will not have a vote on any proposal. Apart from that, it is not easy to see on what competition grounds the deal would be blocked. After all, Canal Plus, the French pay TV company, already owns the leading French club Paris Saint Germain, apparently in harmony with European competition law.

Although nobody is admitting it in public, the deal is primarily an insurance policy to salvage at least something if the Restrictive Practices Court rules next year that the present agreement between BSkyB, the BBC and the Premier League is illegal, or if in 2001, when the television rights deal expires, the clubs decide to buy satellite space and transmit their own football channels, cutting out the middleman.

If the Manchester United acquisition is cleared by the regulators, other digital television operators will be piling into the market — just in case.

Michael Green's Carlton Communications has begun talks with Arsenal. Let the battle commence...

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loyal fans

Television that battles on through the chaos

It is six in the evening and Channel-3 is putting together its nightly news bulletin, *Stoliza*. This is television in its pioneering prime. The studio backdrop has been lashed up from a slatted window blind and the presenter, Angela Askabova, has to sit on a stack of books to bring her up to camera level. Angela, 26, is also the station's general manager and news editor.

Channel-3 is the independent television station for Syktyvkar (population: 250,000), the capital of the Komi Republic in Russia's frozen north.

Across the country — from Siberia to the Black Sea — there are an estimated 500 city-based stations, pumping out a daily fare of news, features, quizzes, soaps, movies and commercials. Competing against the two state networks, ORT and RTT, state-financed regional channels and a number of independent networks, they are an expression of both democracy and capitalism. Today their role has never been more important — or more threatening.

Such stations started almost by accident. Most Russian apartment blocks have a master antenna on the roof which transmits programmes to individual flats. *Entrepreneurial occupants* realised they could relay tapes of pirated films and American soaps plucked from the sky to their neighbours for a small charge. Add to this a camcorder for some personalised linking material and you have a television station.

Russia's pioneering city television is fighting for survival, says **Michael Delahaye**

From that it is a small step to hire or hoist a transmitter, and beam farther afield.

Channel-3's six-hour evening schedule is a respectable mix of the bought-in, sponsored and home-grown. But its flagship is its nightly news.

Tonight's bulletin comprises six stories: a local opera diva has returned from a masterclass in Moscow; a saw mill is installing new Western machinery; there have been a couple of killings; and, for the republic's border guards, today is an excuse to get well lubricated on their annual holiday.

The entire package will be prerecorded two hours before broadcast. Fortunately there aren't many breaking stories in Syktyvkar. In fact, during July and August the news service closes.

Channel-3's half dozen reporters, all women in their twenties, are skilled journalists and almost all of them are familiar with working on computers. The three cameramen lack formal training, but they turn in broadcast-quality material using



New television stations in Russia, such as Channel-3, sometimes find that the struggle to stay on air is at the cost of their hard-won independence

Super-VHS cameras costing a tenth of the Sony Betacam favoured by the "big boys".

Channel-3 is one of the more accurate of the home-grown stations. It is lucky in having a local university with a progressive faculty of journalism from which to recruit.

For 70 years in Russia a "journalist" was someone who lightly edited the latest government handout and, in their approach to reporting, many city-based stations still take their cue from the old Soviet handbook. The result can be a visual version of *Pravda*, with a reluctance to humanise social issues and focus on individuals. Nor do stations always distinguish between news and adverts. Paying to appear in a news item is not unknown.

Few stations can live by commercials and sponsorship alone. Unlike in Britain, where television advertising is more lucrative than both print and radio, in Russia it is the cheapest of the three. A station is doing well if it gets more than \$100 for a one-minute slot in prime time. And often the

payment will be not in cash, but in barter. Many stations end up doing a deal with their local municipality for subsidised accommodation or a contribution to operating costs. In return, the authorities may demand a right of access to the airwaves, which can come dangerously close to editorial interference.

The only other source of income is the sale of airtime to candidates in Russia's seemingly endless local, parliamentary and presidential elections. At up to \$500 a minute, it can prove irresistible. Some stations generate more than half their income this way. But there are dangers: at best, pressure on the station to be less than impartial; at worst, the inclusion of paid-for propaganda within news bulletins.

In the present economic climate, a national shake-out is inevitable. Some larger Russian cities now have five or more local channels, and a station has to broadcast for most of the evening to hold its audience. There are only three options: show pirated material (risky), produce its own

programmes (costly), or sign up with a "network provider" to fill the hole, often in return for a stake in the company.

TNT, part of the influential Media-Most Group, which also owns Russia's best-known independent channel, NTV, is one of the newest — and most aggressive — network providers. It already has about a hundred stations on its books and owns a few of them outright. Its latest acquisition is Syktyvkar's Channel-3.

Once part of a group, it is even harder for the city-based stations to maintain their free-wheeling independence.

Igor Malashenko, NTV's general director, denies they would ever use their TNT affiliates as political tools: "We always advise our partners to be as distanced or detached from political parties as much as they can."

Yet during the 1996 presidential elections, NTV — along with most other broadcasters — was seen as actively promoting Boris Yeltsin's candidacy against the Communists. The charitably inclined argue that this support was less for Mr

Yeltsin than for Russia's fledgling democracy, as represented by Mr Yeltsin.

Mr Malashenko believes that there would be no justification for supporting individual candidates next time: "I do not think that in the year 2000 the choice is going to be as dramatic or as historical as it was in 1996, when there was still a threat of some return to Communism."

That was before the political turmoil of recent weeks. Mr Malashenko and his colleagues in the independent sector may yet find themselves forced into a more overtly political role. For the city-based stations, though, the more immediate worry is less of editorial compromise than of financial ruin as Russia's market economy self-destructs. The only consolation will be journalistic: that of living in interesting times. Certainly there will be no lack of news for the evening bulletins.

● Michael Delahaye's visit was financed by the Know How Fund, and organised by The Thomson Foundation and Internews Russia.

You've read the magazine, now see the TV show

Next Thursday at 11.05pm a small yet important revolution will take place on Channel 4. For the first time on British terrestrial television, a magazine — the trendy style and culture monthly *Dazed and Confused* — will broadcast its own programme, under its own name. Although the BBC has been lucratively spinning-off magazines from programmes for years, the Independent Television Commission has prevented commercial channels from turning the formula on its head and devising programmes based on magazines, for fear that publishers would simply create extended advertisements for their titles. This ban was lifted from cable and satellite channels a year ago, and from terrestrial channels two weeks ago, after intense pressure from publishers including Michael Heseltine, the former President of the Board of Trade and a director of Haymarket Publishing. The only proviso was that "masthead" programmes did not carry exactly the same content as the publications they were based on, and that references to the publications were kept to a minimum.

The first to hit the screen

Viewers will soon be watching programmes based on popular publications. Chris Ayres reports

will be a two-hour programme devised by the creators of *Dazed and Confused*, its 21-year-old Editor, Jefferson Hack, and Rankin Waddell, a 33-year-old photographer.

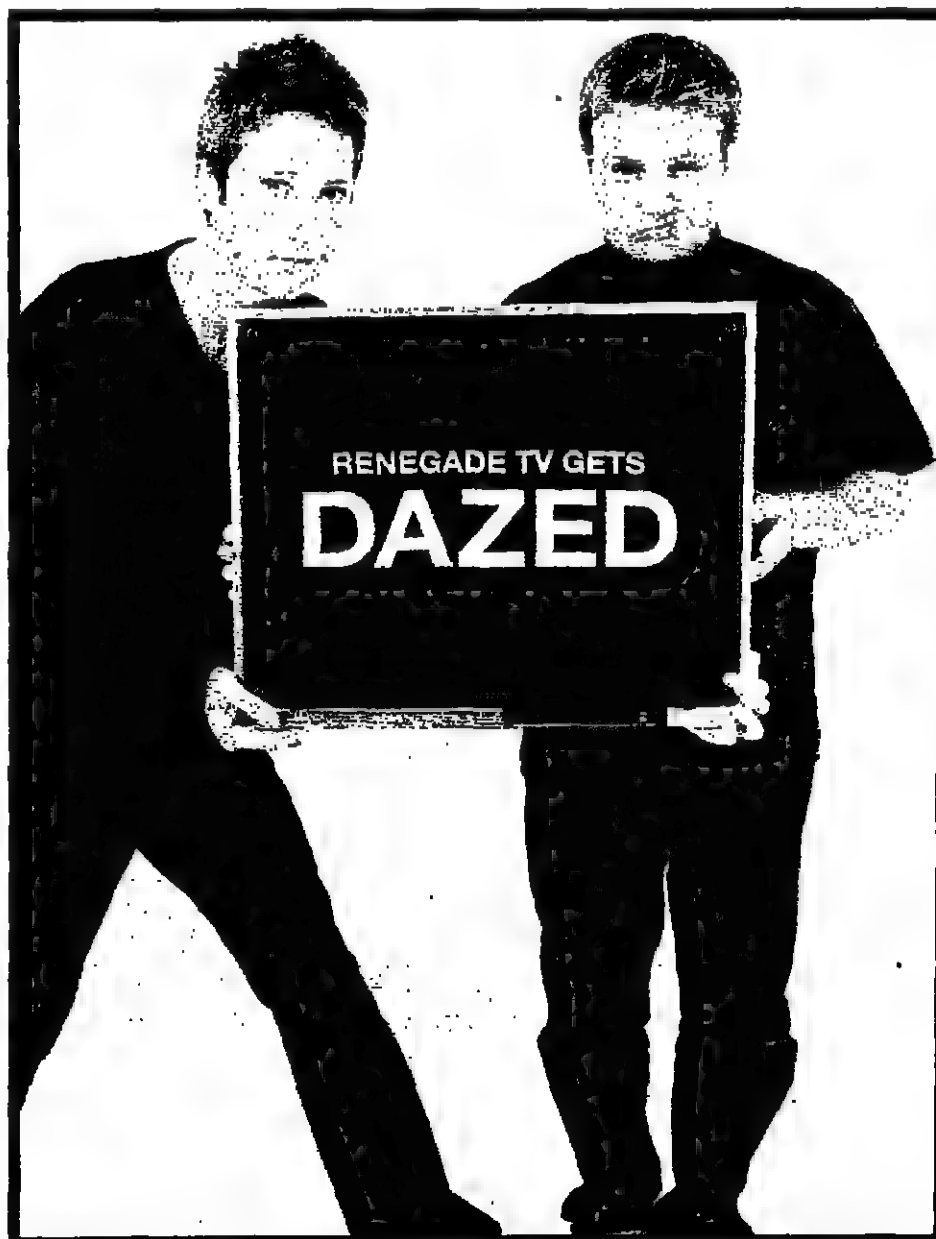
The programme, a one-off, will be shown on Channel 4 on Thursday as part of its *Renegade TV* season, under the title "Renegade TV gets *Dazed*". At its first public airing, at the Edinburgh Television Festival last month, Waddell told his audience that television was boring, particularly youth-orientated shows such as *Chris Evans's TFI Friday*. "Irony and irreverence are what programme-makers use to disguise lack of content," he said.

The ITC will be heartened to know that Waddell's attempt to right this is not an obvious advertisement for his magazine. In fact, it takes significant commitment to sit through the programme, given that much of it consists of interference and white noise crammed between flimsily arty short films. The programme claims to

demonstrate that television does not have to patronise, pigeonhole and be comfortable, but much of it looks disappointingly familiar.

Hack and Waddell do, however, occasionally deliver some interesting material. There is a funny sketch by the comedian Paul Kaye, a serious documentary on musical minimalists presented by the singer Björk, and a brilliantly eccentric profile of an organisation which plots custard-pie attacks on public figures such as Microsoft's Bill Gates. Apart from the occasional graphic of the word *Dazed*, there is no obvious plug for the magazine.

Whatever the viewing figures, *Dazed and Confused* has stolen a march on its competitors. Condé Nast, the publisher of *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*, and Emap, which produces titles such as *FHM* and *Just Seventeen*, plan similar ventures. In its own dishevelled and slightly pretentious way *Dazed and Confused* has beaten them to it.



Jefferson Hack and Rankin Waddell left their rivals standing in the dash to television

Telly which hopefully your parents will hate

If comedy is the new rock and roll, the major labels — in this case the television companies — have made it increasingly difficult for fresh performers to break into the business, *Vai Sampson* writes.

It is now widely acknowledged in the TV industry that it is virtually impossible to get a sitcom made that does not have a star name attached, or which doesn't adhere to a proven ratings-winning formula.

But as the original alternative comedians such as French and Saunders or Reeves and Mortimer become mainstream, TV comedy looks set to wither without new blood.

There is a glimmer of hope for new talent in the form of *Comedy Nation*, a late-night offering from BBC2, which begins its second 13-part run tonight at 12.05am.

Aimed at viewers in their twenties, the series will showcase more than 70 performers, ranging from the avant-garde performance artist The Divine David and his impression of Christ on the Cross, to the quirky Shelagh Martin, wondering if dormice got their name by doing security at mouse discos.

An outlet for character-based comedians rather than stand-up performers, the sketches have a raw feel, partly because much of the material is made on a limited budget and partly because some of the gags would never make it on to the screen before midnight.

The biker, Jimmy James (played by James Holmes), in therapy to deal with his PMT — pre-Millennial tension — makes probably the first jokes about Diana, Princess of Wales, on television. And there are references to sex and drugs that might make the National Viewers and Listeners' Association blanch.

"There should always be TV your parents hate," says Jon Plowman, the BBC's

Head of Comedy Entertainment. He is hopeful that some of the participants in *Comedy Nation* will continue the honourable tradition of Monty Python by creating comedy that a younger generation feels it owns.

"It is interesting to see the concerns of a different generation," says Plowman. "We hope that at that time of night there are people watching who like edgier comedy, and who are tolerant of experimentation."

Comedy Nation's producers have tried to operate an open-door policy. As well as tawling the comedy circuit, a paragraph in *Time Out* requesting material re-

sulted in more than 300 sketches arriving at their office. In view of the show's small budget, performers are asked to provide their own clothes and props.

The main advantage of this hand-to-mouth approach is the speed with which new material can get on air. Jon Plowman says: "The development time in television is notorious. You talk to endless people who say 'it took 18 months and we got a maybe'. With *Comedy Nation*, a sketch that arrives on Monday may be on air the following Friday."

The chance to fail is one of the most crucial elements in the mix. The producers have been told that the question "is it trying something new?" is more important than "is it side-splittingly funny?"

Success will be judged by the number of spin-offs, pilots or performers who make the transition to earlier timeslots. Two pilot shows have developed from the first series and one performer is already being groomed for bigger things. "The achievement of *Comedy Nation* is opening the door and getting things on," Plowman says. "If the stuff is laugh-out-loud funny as well, I'll throw my hat in the air."

Cable channel kicks off with a corker

THE dispute over BSkyB's bid for Manchester United is making a happy man of Paul Ridley, the former sports editor of *The Sun*. Now chief executive of MUTV, the world's first football channel devoted to a world's first club, he spent the summer racking his brains about how to grab some headlines for yesterday's Cable TV launch.

It was proving tough — the channel doesn't even have delayed rights to Premier League matches, and is filling airtime with cookery lessons from the club's Danish chef and dai-fu footage of the lads' training.

Then the BSkyB takeover broke, and the media has been beating and the studio floors, "It's been down millions in marketing," he says. "We'll be presenting all sides of the controversy, interviewing we're not like *The Sun*, pretending there's no resistance, or *The Mirror*, there's everyone's marching on Old Trafford." Long-term his dream is

simple: rights to Man United games.

ITN's presenters and top staff have been told to pencil in Monday, January 4, for the replacement of *News at Ten* with *News at 6.30pm*: a sign of confidence that approval will be given by the Independent Television Commission for this historic change. But Richard Eyre, ITV's personable chief executive, who is masterminding the lobbying, is clearly better at appealing advertisers than charming the politicians, the main opponents of the move.

He made a guest appearance at the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising council meeting late last week, to bring its members up to date.

In a further neat move, Eyre is co-hosting a party with the ITC's chief



executive, Peter Rogers, to mark the publication of volume five of a mammoth history of ITV — just weeks before the commission-meets to say yes or no to the change.

VISCOUNT Rothermere's funeral this week (followed by a stylish champagne wake at the Savoy) was accompanied by much speculation about which editors will suffer as Paul Dacre flexes his muscles. But the real action is taking place a little further down the food chain. Max Hastings acted with dispatch on Monday: he removed Adam Ed-

wards, the Editor of *ES*, the *Evening Standard's* Friday supplement, just a year after he revamped it as a less laddish, more girlie read. It's an odd move since Edwards is mated with Rothermere's son and heir, Jonathan. And was booked to play golf with him later this month near his country house in East Sussex.

The signs are that the new *ES* will be a meatier read, though as Edwards observes: "The paper has never solved this conundrum: is the *Standard* for commuters going out of London, or for those rushing in to Soho?" His take? "Soho definitely."

JOHN MULHOLLAND, whose efforts to breathe life into a new daily *Sporting Life* were scotched by David Montgomery, is joining *The Observer* as a deputy editor. Mulhol-

land, former media editor of *The Guardian*, worked closely with Roger Aton, *The Observer's* new Editor, and although *Observer* journalists are worried about potential tension between their new two deputy editors (Paul Webster is already in place), it would seem that since they are all from *The Guardian*, they are likely to be team players.

Meanwhile, *The Observer* has announced another ten redundancies among journalists.

NEWS broke this week — through penny-pinching Lord Hollick's United News & Media — that Channel 5 was nipping up larger than expected losses.

I hope he didn't get to hear of yesterday's jolly. All the staff at Channel 5's slick Covent Garden headquarters were invited to Chessington World of Adventure to bond on its rides. It's clearly hard work being modern and mainstream.

Sounding out a career in radio

There is something in the airwaves that the young find irresistible. In the third part of his guide to the media, **Michael Leapman** looks at careers in broadcasting

For listeners and broadcasters, radio is a flexible friend who travels light. No complex, costly equipment is required to transmit or to receive programmes.

A job in radio may be less glamorous — and usually less well paid — than in television, its sexier younger sister. The attraction is that the free and easy nature of radio offers chances for young people to gain experience from the beginning. And after digital radio hits its stride next year, there will be more stations and more opportunities.

"It's a young industry, much younger than TV or newspapers," says Richard Huntingford, chief executive of Chrysalis Radio, which owns the five Heart and Galaxy independent stations. "It attracts young people because it's immediate. If you have an idea in the morning you can get it on air in the afternoon." You do not need a degree to succeed in radio — Mr Huntingford does not have one. "It's more to do with creative talent," he says. "And you have to be adaptable. A lot of people think they're going to be the next Chris Evans and find that what they're good at is marketing."

For other jobs in the business, training is needed. Radio journalists need the same qualifications as in print and TV. For production and editing posts technical knowledge is needed, while a business qualification helps to break into advertising sales or marketing.

How do I apply direct to a radio station?

The Radio Authority, the regulator of commercial radio, publishes a fact sheet, *Careers in Broadcasting*, with information and advice, and a Pocket Book with addresses and phone numbers of all commercial radio stations and news services. Contact the Authority on 0171-430 2734 or www.radio-authority.org.uk.

If you want to be a presenter, send a tape to a station to show off your on-air persona. Local independent and BBC stations get dozens of these each week, so their threshold of resistance is high. It helps if you can show commitment by having done unpaid work in hospital, community or student radio, or as a DJ. There are more than 300 hospital radio stations — so they provide experience in presenting, commentating and journalism. Several big names began their careers in hospital radio. Ring the Hospital Broadcasting Association on 01283 50111.

Community Radio is run by non-profit-making groups to

support community and social objectives. For details ring the Community Media Association on 0114-279 5219. There are around 80 student stations and you need not be a media student to work at one. The annual conference of the Student Radio Association is attended by many industry executives seeking talent. Details from the Radio Academy (0171-255 2010).

Several groups of independent stations have their own training schemes. Galaxy, for instance, runs a free course lasting ten weeks, largely aimed at the 15-17 age group, in Bristol, Manchester, Leeds and soon Birmingham. Ring 0117-901 0101.

Ermap radio, with 20 local stations, has new graduate recruitment and apprenticeship schemes, phone 0161-288 5000.

What about the BBC?

BBC local stations recruit in a similar way as independent stations for junior positions, but to aim higher you have to tackle the formidable bureaucracy of the BBC appointments system. It has a number of elite training schemes for graduates, always oversubscribed. BBC Regional Broadcasting received more than 2,000 applications last year for 13 places. BBC World Service has a specialised need for linguists and foreign affairs specialists on its language services. For details of all BBC job opportunities ring their interactive line on 0181-576 0639, see Ceefax page 696 or visit its website at www.bbc.co.uk/jobs.

How do I find a course?

Several universities and colleges run degree courses in journalism or media studies that let students specialise in radio. There are also a number of postgraduate courses. For a list, get *A Student's Guide to Entry to Media Studies*, published by UCAS (01242 222444) at £10. The Broadcast Journalism Training Council (0171-727 9522) has a list of 16 approved courses in radio journalism. Visit its website at www.bjtc.org.uk.

The best courses are oversubscribed, so for acceptance on a worthwhile one you will need three good A levels. The choice of subjects is not critical. The interviewer will be testing verbal and social skills. Make sure your chosen college has a modern radio studio and that students get ample access. One of the best in London is the University of Westminster (0171-911 5000; www.wmin.ac.uk). Farnborough College of Technology (01252 407270) runs postgraduate courses that cover all radio skills, not just journalism.



John Peel is a legendary figure as a DJ and presenter. The advent of digital radio will create many more stations — and more jobs — in a medium that is informal, immediate and inexpensive

The inside story

Until 1973, legitimate radio was monopolised by the BBC, with its four national networks, regional and local stations, a network of local radio stations in large cities and the External Services. There were also a few offshore pirate music stations. Licensed commercial radio began in 1973.

Now the Radio Authority licenses 219 local commercial stations and three national services: Classic, Virgin and Talk. Most specialise in music of a particular kind — rock, golden oldies, modern dance, and so on — and provide varying amounts of local news and information. The BBC's 38 local radio stations place more emphasis on news and information.

The BBC's national networks are the External Services, Radio 1 for the young, Radio 2 serves the older generation, Radio 3 plays mainly classical music, Radio 4 is speech-based news, drama and current affairs — while Radio 5 gives a 24-hour service of news and sport.

BBC domestic radio is funded through the licence fee. The

BBC World Service broadcasts to an estimated international audience of 138 million, and is funded by the Foreign Office.

Digital radio

Digital transmission will allow much clearer sound quality than the present analogue system. New receivers will be needed to listen to digital programmes. The technology allows many more stations to exist.

Existing BBC and commercial stations will be available on both digital and analogue for the next few years. The Radio Authority will license eight national digital commercial channels, including the three existing national services. Over the next few years local digital services will also be established.

Who does what?

The producer organises the programme, decides on the running order, arranges studio guests and makes sure any taped material is to hand at the right time. In music programmes the DJ helps the producer to choose the records.

News and current affairs slots may additionally have an editor, as on a newspaper, who will decide what stories need covering and assign reporters. In small local radio stations one person may cover a variety of jobs — producing, editing, newsreading, presenting, researching and even going out with a tape recorder to report news stories or make documentaries.

National and foreign news come to local stations either from wire services, or from dedicated radio news providers who supply their own voice reports. Chief among them is Independent Radio News (IRN), a division of Independent Television News (ITN).

At least one technician is on duty during transmission time to keep the studio in working order. In commercial radio the advertising sales staff play a key role, providing the revenue to keep the company in business. They often operate on a group-wide basis. The job of the marketing department is to place the station in the public eye by organising publicity and participation in local events.

A Classic route to the top

Susannah Simons, presenter at Classic FM and executive of GWR radio group



Ms Simons studied first for the theatre but switched to radio and was accepted on a BBC training course and became a sound effects studio manager. "I spent a lot of time opening and closing doors, making rustling noises for sheets and pretending to be a vampire," she recalls. "I had a wonderful time."

Her next job was at Leeds, on a northern arts programme for Radio 3. When commercial radio began in 1973 she was recruited by Capital Radio. Then she joined the all-speech

LBC before going back to the BBC for her first job in TV, on the current affairs programme *Tonight*. After a stint with Radio 4 she went to Channel 4, where she joined the board of a company producing the channel's daily business programme. She joined Classic FM as a music presenter and now conducts a weekly interview and is head of corporate relations for the GWR group, the company that owns Classic and 30 local independent stations. Her advice to presenters: "Be prepared to start at the bottom. Be determined. Have your own personality and put it in the programme."

First Oxford, then the world

Sam Younger, managing director of BBC World Service



Mr Younger, an Oxford graduate with a degree in philosophy, politics and economics, worked first as deputy editor of the monthly journal *Middle East International*.

In 1979 he became a talks writer on the BBC World Service, dealing mainly with the Middle East.

In 1984 he became a current affairs producer for Radio 4, before returning to the World Service in various production roles. In 1987 he was made head of current affairs, then head of the Arabic Service.

"After nine months in the job, the Iraqis invaded Kuwait and that put the Arabic Service at centre stage," he says. It meant that he caught the eye of senior executives and in 1992 he was made controller of the overseas services, then director of broadcasting, and in 1994 managing director of the World Service.

"I don't think I would be able to join the BBC today with the qualifications I had in 1979," he says. "Today we're looking for more evidence of real commitment to broadcasting and journalism."

"I always advise people to get an internship with a newspaper or a radio station."

NEXT WEEK: MAGAZINES

One last gasp from the tobacco giants

ONE effect of the Government's dithering over a ban on tobacco advertising is that the big tobacco companies have time to conduct one last stand.

So don't be surprised by a new advertising blitz from Rothmans as it launches its Winfield brand in the UK this month. This week Rothmans handed that task to a grateful Saatchi & Saatchi, along with the European accounts for Rothmans's King Size and Dunhill and Carrier cigarettes.

Rothmans's millions fills a

big hole at Saatchi that has existed ever since the Maurice Saatchi breakup resulted in Gallaher moving its Silk Cut business to the new M & C Saatchi.

Most of it will go behind Winfield, the number one cigarette in Australia, and a brand being launched across Europe. Rothmans has already demonstrated its commitment to Winfield by plastering its name all over Williams Formula One cars.

And, although Rothmans, like other cigarette manufacturers, will go out with an ad-



Stefano Hatfield

vertising bang, Saatchi's appointment is almost as much about the need to find future alternatives to mainstream advertising.

Gallaher, like Rothmans, has moved to sponsor Formula One with its Benson & Hedges brand. It has also briefly tried a contract publishing magazine for Silk Cut, Marlboro and Camel have led the push into leisure clothes.

But, now that the fuss about Bernie Ecclestone and Labour Party donations has died down, how long exactly has tobacco got? The EU directive banning tobacco advertising is expected to be passed in the next Parliamentary session. Poster ads will be banned in June 2000, press ads a year later (commercials are already banned). Sponsorship is to be outlawed in 2003.

but sponsorship of worldwide events would be allowed to continue until 2006.

So, until then, expect the tobacco companies and their agencies to spend what they can — unless the Government manages to rediscover its nerve.

Advertising agencies don't often fire their clients in the way they did in the good old arrogant 1970s. Margins are being constantly eroded, and they need the volume. As finding new business is an expensive, risky process, most agencies decide it's better to stick with the devil they know.

So, when Grey Advertising's managing director, Steve Blamer, resigned his Matthew Clark client (Diamond White and Blackthorn ciders) and publicly expressed his anger, one can only wonder

what had been going on behind the scenes.

"This is about principle," insisted Blamer, claiming his client had "misled" the agency and gone behind his back to seek new ideas from other agencies for Blackthorn cider. For once the client hit back. Matthew Clark issued a statement, claiming it had been forced to go public because of Blamer talking to the advertising press.

"As a general point," the statement began mildly, "it is the case that a relationship between client and agency rarely breaks down when good creative work is being generated and it is the inability of Grey to produce excellent creative work to our standards — and that can then be executed — which is the nub of the issue."

Ugh! Looks like Grey came up with an idea that they couldn't get on-air for legal reasons. Matthew Clark got fed up waiting, and started looking around. This shows both how much pressure the client is under in the context of the cider market's well-publicised difficulties. And, how fragile so many client-agency relationships are.

ent-agency relationships are.

Would that someone would go as public in the case of Barclaycard's decision to look beyond BMP DDB, its agency of nine years, for new ideas on its £15 million advertising.

Paul Parmenter, Barclaycard's marketing director, cited the Rowan Atkinson campaign that lasted six years and the "don't put it off, put it on" ads that began last year as highlights of the "exceptional advertising" BMP produced.

So why look around, then? Looking forward to 1999, it is clear that this is an ideal time for Barclaycard to consider some new ideas. Ah, the Millennium! That's a relief. For a moment you could have thought mistakenly that the problem was Barclaycard's 22.9 per cent interest rate and £10 annual charge, when new cards are being launched with interest rates as low as 9.9 per cent (AmEx Blue). Either way, the current advertising's the fall guy.

Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of Campaign

SIGNING UP TO DIGITAL

AT present, most consumers remain fairly clueless about digital TV (DTV), but in the coming weeks the main players are to wind up their subscriber-enticing campaigns. By the end of the year there should not be a TV-watching household in the land that has not heard the merits of digital.

So what is on offer? On terrestrial television we have ONdigital, a service owned by Carlton and Granada, which is planning a 15-channel service when it launches in the autumn. ONdigital's programming will come from BBC, Flextech, the two TV companies, with a few channels from Sky. ONdigital is also hoping

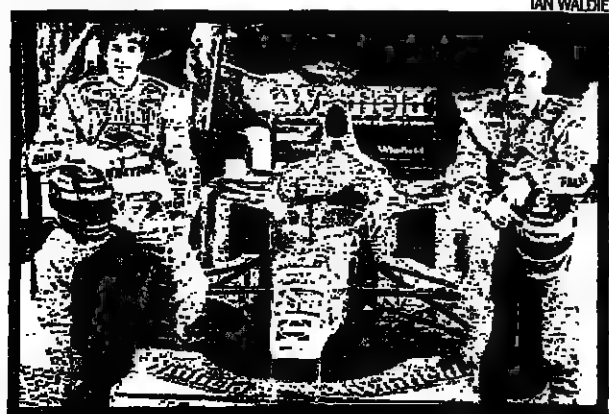
to secure the rights to Premier League football.

The other main contender is BSkyB, which launches its Sky Digital service on October 1. Sky has unveiled 80 channels, which will be available across six different subscription packages.

There is still the feeling that digital will get off to a slow start. According to Merrill Lynch, ONdigital will reach 1.6 million subscribers by the 2003, achieving a 6.5 per cent penetration of households. Sky Digital is predicted to beat this, with 3.6 million subscribers by 2003, according to Morgan Stanley Dean Witter.

Earlier this week, ITV urged the Government to decide on a switch-off date for analogue TV as early as possible. The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), however, has given warning that it is too early to set a date for turning off the transmissions. The institute says that "to contemplate now a date when those viewers either unable or unwilling to buy into digital may be deprived of their analogue service seems unwarranted."

Media's online information and analysis is accessed on: <http://www.mediatele.co.uk> Telephone: 0171-459 7575



Rothmans: promoting Winfield through Formula One

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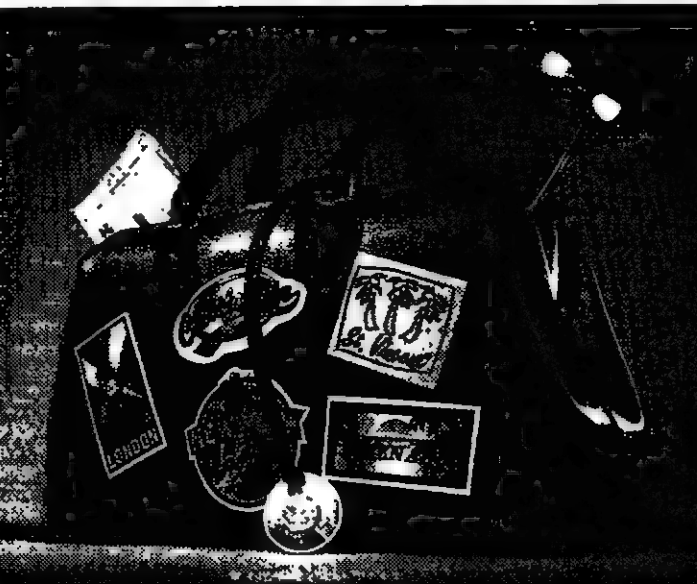
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She says: "The league would give priority to Harington children. The law that an LEA must be able to demonstrate educational grounds for a change in admissions criteria is based on distance. But those parents seeking to send their children to schools in the area have to provide proof to demonstrate that there were no educational grounds for the change in policy." Mrs Ruff believes that this puts parents at a disadvantage because it is almost impossible for them to gain access to the sort of information needed.

LEAs face a dilemma. When there is only a small number of popular schools, but a lot of hopeful pupils in the catch-

Families will spend thousands of pounds to move into the "right area" to ensure a child's place in a popular school

Haringey council is to vote on the proposal later this month. By then, it is hoped that any legal difficulties will have been resolved. If the policy is adopted, it will be introduced next September. It could herald a fresh debate for LEAs everywhere about access rights to secondary schools.

The school photograph was an historical record before most parents had a memento of their child.

St Blogs can sell 200 picture packs at £10 it stands to profit by several hundred pounds.

Of course, you don't want the photographs, but neither do you want the child to feel "rejected" or disappointed and all the other parents seem to be buying them. So you pay up — as do 90 per cent of parents at infant level, 80 per cent at junior school and 50 per cent at secondary schools, according to one Kent school photographer.

And it doesn't just happen in September these days either. Some schools have photographers in about three times a year. One mother, whose child attends a private nursery in South London, told me that the school had gone one step further and invited a company to make a video of each child. She was cross, but she bought it — at £15 — because she did not want to upset her son or to be seen as an awkward parent.

It is time that parents stood out against school photographers. I am convinced that a few mothers and fathers in each school united to refuse to allow their children to be photographed — there is almost always a letter home in advance advising parents when the photographer is due — many others would breathe a sigh of relief and do likewise.

Parents who want a formal studio portrait of their offspring should go to a photographer out of school hours. It is not the business of schools to provide this as a "service." Schools must find other ways to raise extra money without compromising lesson time or exploiting children.

Yet much of this money already disappears into the black hole of town hall budgets. Will parents re-

Teaching unions are predictably hostile to "creeping privatisation" but, before long, a school somewhere is going to take the plunge. Employers' organisations have been increasingly vocal in their criticisms of schools this summer, and it is time to see whether business methods can really make a difference.



AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER — — — — — THE TIMES

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The cat's whiskers: Sprite

How much longer can they keep this up?

The team running Viagra trials in Bristol were faced with several knotty little problems, some of them really quite hard. As one nice young doctor put it: "We needed a tool that would help us quantify erections." Oops.

They developed the RigiScan, a nifty device for detecting penile tumescence, collected a library of pornographic videos to stimulate sexual response and introduced the concept of keeping an "erection diary". Just don't leave it lying around when auntie visits.

But the biggest challenge to come up with *Sexual Chemistry* (BBC2), *Horizon's* history of the treatment of impotence (or "male erectile dysfunction" as we must now call it) was how to avoid accidental doubles entendres, or worse, outright sniggering.

They plumped for a reassuringly sensible, motherly voiceover. My review tape lacked end credits.

but it sounded like the actress Lynda Bellingham. (By the time this hit the newsagents I will know if I was right.) There was a lot hanging on these men's erections," she intoned solemnly, as if Viagra wouldn't melt in her mouth, and then I heard it — an unmistakable snort. Sadly this will have been edited out of the broadcast programme, but I promise you it was there.

The response of serious documentary-makers to anything viewers might find embarrassing is to get exceptionally puffed-up and serious. We had sombre, slightly eerie incidental music during the introductory sequence and lots of impressively scientific shots of the banks of little drawers that research pharmacologists keep their experimental drugs in — that sort of thing. And with the exception of that tell-tale snort, the voiceover maintained an air of majestic calm and warm, caring sobriety.

But my tape also lacked the computer graphics used to illustrate those erections off which so much was to hang and some wag had substituted the missing material with the caption "Computer Graphics II — The Full Monty". So we now know that the more sepiakhal the tone, the more likely it is that the production team are rolling around the editing room in fits of adolescent mirth.

It seems to me that there has actually been a great deal of coverage of this subject, even before Viagra thrust itself upon the nation's consciousness. Apart from a rainforest's worth of newspaper about the drug itself, we have had radio programmes, television snippets and any number of press articles about earlier treatments for male impotence. But this programme did have some entertaining details to add.

I hadn't realised that vacuum-

pump devices were invented by an American car-tyre repair man called Geddings Osborn, who made his first contraption out of bits of windshield washers and a bicycle pump.

It was also news to me that the doctor who invented penile injections (have you noticed that nurses always say "You'll just feel a little scratch" these days?) had demonstrated on himself in front of an

audience of 200 surprised international experts.

The more interesting material concerned the development of the drug. This combined the accidental discovery, by researchers at Pfizer Ltd in Kent, of the agent that allows blood flow into the penis, with the discovery in America that nitric oxide provides the chemical message from the brain which stimulates arousal. The final element was the race to develop a female equivalent drug, about which the researchers were reluctant to give much away.

A golden future beckons, it seems, when worn-out middle-aged couples will put the children to bed, pop a pill apiece over their supper and be primed and ready to go, before deciding they are too tired and falling asleep anyway.

Self-help of a rather different kind was on the agenda in two new series that started last night. Nigel Slater's *Real Food* (Channel 4)

provided half an hour of undiluted foodie sensuality, as the fashionable young chef found ever more inventive ways of making love to free-range chickens.

At first glance, Slater looks slightly nerdy, with his little round granny glasses and homely, boyish features. But don't be fooled by those cheeky little nose-wrinkling expressions. This man approaches poultry with the practised seductive arts of the most ruthless Casanova.

He even recruited like-minded friends. Peter Gordon made a luscious-looking Singaporean spicy chicken soup, while this paper's former columnist Nigel Lawson did things with roast chicken that would make your eyes water, never mind your mouth.

Slater's approach is not as "simple" as he claims, in that he rustles up little numbers involving 16 ingredients, half of which are

unobtainable in ordinary supermarkets, whatever he claims. But his enthusiasm is infectious and he has the creative spontaneity of a jazz musician — a perfect antidote to Delia Smith.

Another kind of sensual pleasure returned with the new series of *Ground Force* (BBC1). This is a "makeover" programme, with a dash of *Challenge Anneka* thrown in, as last night the team struggled to finish the new garden before international women's rugby star, Debbie Francis got home.

As gardening programmes go, it's not at all bad. Alan Titchmarsh's designs are imaginative and not impracticable, but the real pleasure for me comes from watching Charlie Dimmock, his female assistant. With the strong frame and unkempt locks of a Saxon farmer's wife, she exudes a vigorous, springy enthusiasm, even more appetising than Thai green chicken curry. Viagra anybody?

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

BBC1

8.00am Business Breakfast (25508)
 9.00 BBC Breakfast News (1) (12782)
 9.00 Kilroy (773140)
 9.40 Breakers (768385)
 10.05 Sex Wars: Why are men inclined to pursue younger women? (9657879)
 10.30 Daily Live (1) (4244633)
 10.55 News (1) and weather (1895169)
 11.00 Style Challenge: Two patriotic pals go in for a thoroughly British look, ready for the last night of the Proms (1855646)
 11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (1808633)
 11.55 Neighbours (1) (4252968)
 12.20pm News (1) and weather (7821072)
 12.50 Live Commonwealth Games
 Grandstand: Steve Rider introduces coverage of the opening ceremony from the Bukit Jalil Stadium in Kuala Lumpur, attended by Prince Edward, President of the Commonwealth Games Federation, King Tuanku of Malaysia and representatives of the Queen (1) (4354781)
 3.25 Playdays (1) (7949633), 3.45 Arthur (1) (1740091), 4.10 Ace Ventura, Pet Detective (1) (831527), 4.35 Clarissa Explains It All (1) (3316227), 5.00 Newsround (1) (8527879), 5.10 Blue Peter (1) (8680879)
 5.35 Neighbours (1) (1) (447091)
 6.00 News (1) and weather (817)
 6.30 Regional News Magazine (189)
 7.00 Weekend Watchdog with Anne Robinson: New series of consumer investigations (1) (74904)
 7.25 Top of the Pops: James Thakston introduces music from All Saints, Five, Hole, Sheryl Crow, and the Manic Street Preachers (1) (55311)
 7.50 Fawcett Towers: The Psychiatrist: A psychiatrist checks in at the hotel and becomes intrigued by the behaviour of manager Basil (1) (279430)
 8.30 Only Fools and Horses: May The Force Be With You: Rodney unwittingly causes an uproar by bringing home a stranger (1) (1) (9546)
 9.00 News (1) regional news and weather (6430)
 9.30 Dangerfield: Local Colour: New series of the detective drama. Nigel Havers takes over the job of Wandsworth police sergeant from Nigel Le Vaillant, and soon finds himself in conflict with career-minded copper Jane Gurnett (1) (757140)
 10.20 The Hit List (1993): Thriller, with Jeff Fahey, Yancy Butler and James Coburn. A professional assassin is assigned to protect a woman from her late husband's shadowy business partners, and soon learns the perils of merging business with pleasure. Directed by William Webb (1) (970388)
 11.50 The Babe (1992): Biopic of baseball legend George "Babe" Ruth, starring John Goodman and Kelly McGillis. Directed by Arthur Hiller (983968)
 1.45am Weather (2812034)
 1.50 Commonwealth Games: Live update on swimming events from Kuala Lumpur (2260774)
 4.00 BBC News 24

VIDEO PLUS+ and VIDEO PLUS+ codes
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BBC2

6.10am Social Scientists at Work (795904)
 7.00 Teletubbies (1) (1539966), 7.25 The Smurfs (1) (1541701), 7.50 Cartoon Critics (1) (1) (336788), 8.15 Noddy's Island (1) (1539966), 8.35 Spot (1) (1539966), 8.55 Harry and the Hendersons (1) (1) (6781614), 9.10 Cry of the Beluga (1) (1541701), 9.55 Cartoon (9662701), 10.00 Teletubbies (74661)
 10.30 When the Whales Came (1989): Pre-First World War drama set in the Isles of Scilly with Helen Mirren and Paul Scofield. Directed by Clive Rees (1) (1559643)
 12.10pm Wildlife on Two (1) (1) (7805452), 12.40 Johnson and Friends (1739746), 12.50 Working Lunch (238953), 1.15 The Phil Spector Show (1) (2990966)
 2.05 Racing from Goodwood: Coverage of the 2.15, 2.45 and 3.15 races (2118850)
 3.25 Commonwealth Games Grandstand: Further coverage of the opening ceremony (3340053)
 4.15 World Cup Athletics: Sue Barker introduces action from the World Cup in Johannesburg including the men's 100m (45537140)
 6.00 The Simpsons (1) (787188)
 6.45 Commonwealth Games and World Cup Athletics Highlights of the opening ceremony from Kuala Lumpur and action from the World Cup (3432121)
 8.00 Country Tracks: The secret past of Orford Ness: why the intelligence of ovals has been overrated; wilderness training in the Country Tracks Challenge (1) (8055)
 8.30 Gardeners' World: A Japanese plot in Durnford, an intriguing community garden project in southeast London (1) (7188)
 9.00 Game On (1) (1) (4072)
 9.30 Rob C. Nesbitt: Cash decides his wife isn't quite as daisy as his sister-in-law (1) (78817)
 10.00 Never Mind the Buzzcocks: Mark Lammie hosts a new series of the irreverent pop quiz with comedians Vic Reeves and Bill Bailey, Radio 1 DJ Chris Moyles, and Silverstone's James Brown joining Phill Jupitus and Sean Hughes (1) (38180)
 10.30 Newsnight (1) (777362)

HTV

6.00am GMTV (1093833)
 9.25 Vanessa (1) (6620362)
 10.15 This Morning (1) (84213053)
 12.15pm Regional News (2380966)
 12.30 News (1) and weather (50679)
 1.00 WALEs: The Dressing Up Show: Swinging at 60 (1) (17237)
 1.00 Relative Knowledge (1) (17237)
 1.30 Home in the Country (42850)
 12.40 The Jerry Springer Show (328988)
 2.45 WALEs: Get Gardening (1) (654343)
 2.45 The Dressing Up Show: Charity Ball (654343)
 3.15 News (5637275)
 3.20 Regional News and weather (5634188)
 3.25 Wilezards (1) (5617411), 3.35 Archibald and the Koala (4073904), 3.50 The Forgotten Toys (1) (4054617), 4.00 Blazing Dragons (1) (1) (6520237), 4.15 Get Well (1) (8665548), 4.50 The Zig and Zag Show (1) (8476879)
 5.10 A Country Practice (9502121)
 5.40 News (1) and weather (320885)
 6.00 Catchphrase (1) (730614)
 6.25 Regional Weather (331492)
 6.30 Regional News (237)
 7.00 Bruce's Price is Right: New series of the game show (1) (6458)
 7.30 Coronation Street: Maxine reveals the truth to Fiona (1) (121)
 8.00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? (2879)
 8.30 You've Been Framed: Lisa Riley with viewers' video-clips (1) (4614)

Des O'Connor introduces an hour of music, comedy and chat (8pm)

9.00 Des O'Connor Tonight: Joining Des tonight in the first of a new series are the Bee Gees, Robbie Williams, Samantha Janus and Ed Byrne (7411)
 10.00 News at Ten (1) and weather (25695)
 10.30 Regional News and weather (827184)
 10.45 My Blue Heaven (1990): Comedy with Steve Martin, Rick Moranis and John Cusack. An affable Melrose who turns into a greaser is rehired for his own protection. In a small town. But before long he returns to crime. Directed by Herbert Ross (9711072)
 12.35am Nash Bridges (1) (239299)
 1.35 Still in Bed with Me: Dinner (1) (1) (623270)
 2.05 Club@Vision (4521388)
 2.45 The Haunted Ashtenby (1) (19015)
 3.15 Brides of Dracula (1960): with Peter Cushing. A young baron who has inherited the Dracula curse is kept locked away by his mother, but he escapes and rampages through a girl's school. Directed by Terence Fisher (461388)
 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (57207638)
 5.00 Coronation Street (1) (1) (95928)
 5.30 News (21270)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
 1.00pm Echo Point (17237)
 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (7264362)
 2.45-3.15 Our House (564343)
 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9502121)
 6.00 Heart of the Country (730614)
 6.25-7.00 Central News (925505)
 10.40 Central Weekend Live (2871872)
 12.15am Tales from the Darkside (5530367)
 12.40 Nash Bridges (9906096)
 1.35 Club@Vision (2813388)
 2.20 ITV at the Reading Festival (6313883)
 3.15 World Football (16928)
 3.45 Vanessa (4631164)
 4.30 Central Jobfinder '98 (9476560)
 5.20 Asian Eye (8324164)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
 12.15pm Westcountry News (2380966)
 1.00 Special Babies (17237)
 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (7264362)
 2.45-3.15 Westcountry Update (564343)
 5.10-5.40 Catchphrase (9502121)
 6.00-7.00 Westcountry News (88936)
 10.30 Westcountry News (827184)
 10.45 FILM: They Live (9671072)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:
 12.15-12.30 Meridian News and Weather (2380966)
 1.00-1.30 Justice of the Land (17237)
 2.45-3.15 Doing It Up (564343)
 5.10-5.40 Catchphrase (9502121)
 6.00 Meridian Tonight (955)
 6.30-7.00 Southampton International Boat Show Preview (237)
 10.40 Get Real (934966)
 11.10 Ruby Does the Season (437879)
 11.40 Midnight Caller (973102)
 5.00am FreeScreen (55928)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except:
 1.00pm-1.30 Justice of the Land (17237)
 2.45-3.15 Craven's Collectables (564343)
 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9502121)
 6.25-7.00 Anglia News (828508)
 10.30 Anglia News and Weather (827184)
 10.45 FILM: Age of Treason (9671072)

Starts: 7.00am The Big Breakfast (88332)
 9.00 Bewitched (35072), 9.30 FILM: Sweet Romance (7470430), 10.15-10.30 Century Hall of Fame: Richard Burton (1888879)
 11.00 Australia Wild (95041), 11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier (8643), 12.00pm Susan (22508), 12.30 Sesame Street (41121)
 1.00 Slot Meltdown (5790985), 1.15 Tomica's Tanks (57978140), 1.30 Collectors' Lot (97108430), 1.55 Racing from Doncaster (81458459), 4.00 Filmed-to-One: The Big Winners (850), 4.30 Montel Williams (362), 5.00 5 Pump (4237), 5.30 Countdown (614), 6.00 Newyddion (616508), 6.20 Heno (841459), 7.00 Pobl y Cwm (687814), 7.25 Y Cychwyn (82859), 7.50 The Big Breakfast (88332), 8.30 Newyddion (2258), 9.00 Frasier (9140), 9.30 Friends (1985), 10.00 Brookside (828904), 10.35 Frasier (93327), 11.05 South Park (42950), 11.35 TFI Friday (733140), 12.35am Jo Whalley (5457367), 1.20 FILM: Berserk (543557), 3.05 FILM: Mystery of the Wax Museum (4524744)

CHANNEL 4

6.00am Sesame Street (41546)
 7.00 The Big Breakfast (1) (88332)
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 1.35 Collectors' Lot: The romantic novels of Sir Walter Scott (1) (34478169)
 1.55 Racing from Doncaster: Brough Scott introduces the 2.05, 2.35, 3.05 and 3.35 races (81458459)
 4.00 Fifteen to One (1) (1) (850), 4.30 Countdown (1) (3300966), 4.55 Ricki Lake: I Like to Frisk Out My Family (1) (867904), 5.30 Pet Rescue (1) (814)
 6.00 TFI Friday: Chris Evans is joined in the bar by Ben Elton and Danni Minogue. Music comes from Pulp, PJ Harvey, and Roddy Frame (59140)
 7.00 News (1) and weather (238782)
 7.55 Algeria Daily (908995)

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6.00am 5 News and Sport (6679614)
 7.00 WideWorld (1) (1) (1669188), 7.30 Mikeshaki (5632904), 7.55 What-A-Mess (1) (102375), 8.00 Hawkshaw (561492), 8.30 Dappledawn Farm (1) (9646091)
 9.00 Wildlife SOS (1) (1) (8637343), 9.30 Oprah Winfrey Show (1) (7413256), 10.20 Sunset Beach (1) (4685459), 11.10 Lezza (6285463)
 12.00 5 News at Noon (1) (8824879), 12.30pm Family Affairs (1) (1) (2126053), 1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (1) (1668458), 1.30 Sons and Daughters (2125324), 2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (8378463), 2.30 Open House with Gloria Hunniford (3304988)
 3.30 Goddess of Love (1888, TVM) with Vanna White and David Naughton. Comedy about the goddess Venus's quest to prove that her love is not fickle. Directed by Jim Drake (2190701)
 5.10 The Oprah Winfrey Show: Will Smith (9174904)
 6.00 100 Per Cent (4298985)
 6.30 Family Affairs (1) (2126053)
 7.00 5 News (1) (1273098)
 7.30 Where the Bismarck Roam: The writer migration of the caribou (1) (472121)
 8.00 The Car Show: The Renault Clio, an old Porsche 911, car driving computer games (5978607)
 8.30 Sick as a Parrot: Comedy-sports quiz with Jeremy Nicholas (7857184)
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For further listings see Saturday's Vision

SKY MOVIE

8.00am For Hope (1997) (6061527) 7.48 Bed of Roses (1995) (68411) 8.15 Cheyenne (1993) (62275) 11.00 Time Witness (1977) (5430) 1.00pm Bed of Roses (1



RACING 47

Double Trigger
blazes down
final straight

SPORT

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 1998

TENNIS 52

Venus rises to
her task
in US Open

Carlton sets its sights on Arsenal

By MATT DICKINSON

THE board of Manchester United had predicted on Wednesday that it would be setting a trend when it agreed to sell the club to BSkyB for £623 million and confirmation arrived promptly yesterday when Carlton emerged as the latest media predator. Carlton admitted that it is in takeover talks with Arsenal and it was reported that it is also holding talks with Aston Villa, further evidence that the television giants are casting their voracious gaze around the FA Cup Premiership.

Although contact has been made with Tottenham Hotspur, where Alan Sugar, the chairman, recently threatened to sell up because of growing frustration at the club's under-

One possible outcome could be an offer being made by Carlton for Arsenal.

Villa were more circumspect, saying merely: "We have had talks with a communications firm and there is a chance that a deal might be wrapped up in the same way as with Manchester United."

The battle for increasingly lucrative television rights to screen games is why Carlton, worth £2.6 billion, is considering a £275 million offer for the Highbury club. BSkyB's deal to show FA Premier League matches expires in 2001 and the Restrictive Practices Court will rule in January whether clubs will then be allowed to negotiate their own contracts. If so, it would mean a scramble among broadcasters for the rights to leading clubs, so owning one of the country's most successful teams would guarantee a slice of the action. With the advent of multi-channel digital television and pay-per-view, projected revenues dwarf the existing BSkyB deal, in which Premiership clubs expect to earn an average £4 million per year.

However, there are drawbacks, as Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, said after the news of United's takeover by BSkyB. "The big danger is when three or four can break away from the others and the rest cannot keep up," he said. "They can pay players three or four times the salary. The rules of the game could change if four or five clubs have owners from the media."

News of a possible takeover resulted in Arsenal's value leaping by almost 38 per cent to £224 million yesterday, while gossip that Chelsea could be next saw shares rise 13 per cent on the day.

achievement, Carlton's main target is Arsenal. The winners of the Premiership and FA Cup Double have, like Manchester United, been in the thick of talks over a new European Super League and are run by an ambitious and astute board that is keen to keep at the forefront of the booming football market.

The joint-statement from Arsenal and Carlton yesterday said that they had conducted "very preliminary discussions on ways in which the two companies can work together. These talks are too preliminary in nature to assess the probability of any outcome."



Clarke blasts his way out of a bunker on his way to a five-under par first-round score of 67 at the Forest of Arden. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Montgomery goes back to basics

By JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

THERE are few better feelings in golf than going to the practice ground and eradicating a fault, or starting a round having just hit half a dozen really good shots on the practice ground. The difficulty, as Colin Montgomerie and Justin Rose demonstrated here yesterday, in the One 2 One British Masters, is that good form on the practice ground, whether before or after a round, can remain there.

Montgomerie is struggling to eradicate a hook from his game, a rogue stroke that originally entered his repertoire at his own invitation, which makes it even more galling.

"I got to No 2 in the world and when you get to No 2 at anything you want to be No 1," Montgomerie said after his 70, two under par, in the first round at the Forest of Arden. "I felt I needed to improve and I tried to but it didn't work."

In the search for greater control and accuracy, Montgomerie felt he needed to be able to hit more straight shots and the occasional draw to accompany his enviable ability to summon up a judicious fade any time he wanted. That

was the theory. In practice what actually happened was that in trying to become more accurate, Montgomerie actually became less so.

He now has a tendency to hit the occasional wild hook, as he did with his driver on the 13th tee. A second fault is that no longer can he summon up a gentle, controlled fade, which was precisely what he tried to do with a four-iron on the short 5th.

On the 196-yard hole he attempted to move the ball from left to right on the wind. Once he could have probably played this shot with his eyes shut, but this time the ball went billowing out to the right. It was yards off target. "It was an awful shot," Montgomerie said, with a vigorous shake of his head.

As a result of first trying to change his style of play, and now trying to return to it, Montgomerie has been struggling with his game for some time, though there are occasional signs that he is getting back to playing the way he used to.

"Since I lost the Irish Open

in a play-off in July, this game has become difficult," Montgomerie said. "This is the first time in my 11-year professional career that I've found the game difficult."

"I have never thought about the golf swing before, nor what I am doing on the course except for the course management aspect. Now I am thinking about all sorts of things and it's more hard work."

Bill Ferguson, now re-instated as Montgomerie's coach, has said the player must hit 2000 balls, at least, before he begins to feel comfortable again. "It is easy on the practice ground but difficult bringing it from there onto the

course," Montgomerie said. "On the practice ground you can drop another ball, and hit another and it does not matter. On the golf course it does matter. That is where the problem is right now."

As for Montgomerie, so far Rose, Justin was hitting the ball beautifully in practice yesterday morning, according to Ken, his father. On the course, it was different. Rose, unable to gather any inspiration from having one of the day's largest galleries, had a run of five successive holes on which he dropped at least one stroke as he went to the turn in 43, seven over par.

Two more strokes were

dropped on the 10th and 11th, before a degree of stability was demonstrated. Rose played the 12th to the 18th in one under par. This was too little and, almost certainly, too late because surviving the 36-hole cut after starting with an 80, eight over par, his highest score as a professional, will require a score today that is likely to be beyond the ability of the 18-year-old.

There were no such worries for Darren Clarke, who seems as confident as Montgomerie once was, and is playing consistently good golf. To score 67, five under par, on a day that was thoroughly unpleasant at times, with rain squalls and a gusting wind, was good going.

Clarke's certainty and accuracy with his irons, particularly, would have made Montgomerie and Rose green with envy. Clarke, who is trailing Lee Westwood by less than £5,500 in the race to top the order of merit, hit a five-iron to seven feet on the 6th, a seven-iron to 15 feet on the 11th and a six-iron to three feet on the 15th. Such accuracy brought its rewards. Clarke leads by one stroke.

German agrees to end dispute

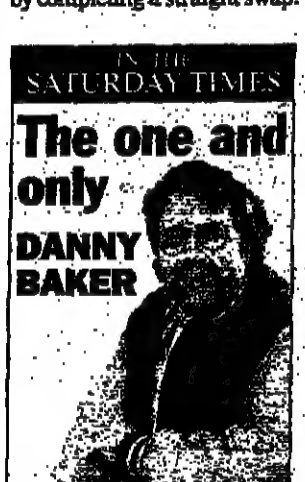
FROM KEVIN EASON
AT MONZA

IT WAS not quite an apology, but it was probably as close as it gets from Michael Schumacher. The man who had accused David Coulthard of trying to kill him at the rain-soaked Belgian Grand Prix apparently had a change of heart after the two met quickly on neutral territory yesterday.

For 90 minutes, they chatted in the Williams motorhome here. Max Mosley, the president of the FIA, the governing body of Formula One, is thought to have had a hand in arranging the meeting in an attempt to defuse a row that had threatened to spill over at the Italian Grand Prix this weekend.

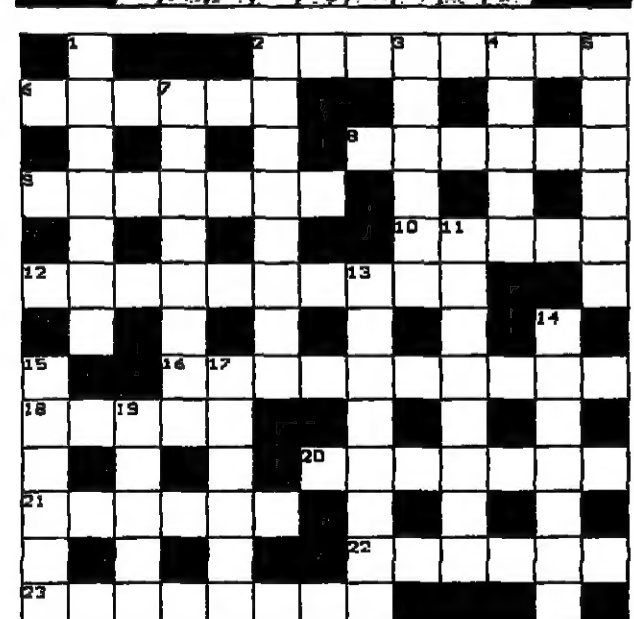
Coulthard emerged from the meeting cool and apparently happy that the spat was over. More significantly, the man who had torn into Coulthard in front of millions of television viewers, effectively accusing him of cheating, was back-tracking, saying that he had been wrong to assume that Coulthard had slowed his McLaren-Mercedes down deliberately in front of him, causing a crash that put the German's Ferrari out of the race and cost him ten valuable world championship points.

The venue for the discussion was ironic, because Williams are yet to sign any drivers for the next season. Jacques Villeneuve was known already to be leaving the team, to join British American Racing, and Heinz-Harald Frentzen announced yesterday that he, too, is leaving, to replace Ralf Schumacher at Jordan. Schumacher, the younger brother of Michael Schumacher, is widely expected to sign a four-year deal with Williams, thereby completing a straight swap.



IN THE SATURDAY TIMES
The one and
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DANNY
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TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1508

- ACROSS
- Voltaire's optimist (Can-dide) (8)
 - Elegant cavalryman (6)
 - Loose collection (6)
 - Australian interior (7)
 - Cloister court (Northern) yard (5)
 - Ranting speaker (3-7)
 - Fond of company (10)
 - Film for home viewing (5)
 - 20 Rail tracks in yard (7)
 - Wood for furniture: edible wrinkled kernel (6)
 - Vigour (6)
 - Range of freedom (8)
- DOWN
- Heaped, white cloud mass (7)
 - Make (future event) impossible (8)
 - Cause of resentment (6)
 - Regularity: a taxonomic group (5)
 - To foam, be agitated (6)
 - Wrecking activity (8)
 - Gullie, subterfuge (8)
 - (NT) hypocrite (8)
 - Trunks and cases (7)
 - Assumption (6)
 - Strongly, healthily built (6)
 - Dutch town, its blue ware (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1507

ACROSS: 1 Hot spot 5 Cadiz 8 Guano 9 Chagrin 10 Bitter Lemons 12 Obuse 14 Make do 17 Pirnrose path 21 Painter 22 Grimm 23 Strut 24 Syringe

DOWN: 1 Highbrow 2 Tract 3 Profess 4 Tackle 5 Charm 6 Derange 7 Zone 11 Bonhomie 13 Tarsier 15 Avenger 16 Morris 18 Motet 19 Avian 20 Opus

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Leicestershire tighten grip as Essex surrender tamely

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

LEICESTER (second day of four): Essex, with six second-innings wickets standing, are 242 runs behind Leicestershire.

CHAMPIONS require fortune as well as form and Leicestershire were blessed by both yesterday. While they swept towards apparently inevitable victory at Grace Road with the compliance of the weather and the abject cricket of Essex, their most pressing rivals, Surrey, could do little but rage at the rain in Durham.

There is an impressive momentum to Leicestershire now, reminiscent of their previous title win two years ago, and their position here is all the more praiseworthy for having lost the toss. Essex wasted the advantage of bowling first and then batted with the spinelessness of a side that cannot wait for the season to end.

They were dismissed for 95, followed on with a daunting deficit of 300 and then lost four further wickets for 56. The pitch, while helpful to seam bowlers who locate the right length, is anything but impossible and it is taking nothing from the efficiency of Leicestershire to report that Essex were truly dreadful.

A defeat here would be their fifth in succession, quite possibly their third by an innings. A footballing equivalent would be seeking heads to roll and even Essex, where loyalty and long service are an expectation not a rarity, may be vulnerable.

Their membership, more championship-minded than most, has become restive, judging by the mail accumulating

at the club office, and the captaincy is sure to be a matter for debate. Paul Prichard, in his fourth season and the most experienced of the current county captains, can hardly feel secure, not least because his own form has collapsed.

Prichard batted twice yesterday and totalled 19 runs, an experience that scarcely denied an already dire average of 14 in a season when his top score is 24. Others have fared only marginally better and even Stuart Law is now batting as if infected by the fatalism around him.

Leicestershire offered a startling contrast. They spent much of the first session taking their first-innings to a formidable 395, then took wickets with such regularity through a rain-interrupted afternoon that one bonding 'huddle' had hardly broken up when another was triumphantly enjoined.

The pillar of their batting

was Vince Wells, finally miscuing to mid-off yesterday after 384 minutes, of which the first 200 were spectacular and the remainder merely steadfast. It was, however, a monumental innings by a man who should feature in any list of contenders for player of the season.

The last three Leicestershire wickets went to the raw speed



Simmons: superb slip catch

LEICESTERSHIRE SCOREBOARD

LEICESTERSHIRE: First Innings			
V J Wells c Ball b Grove	171		
D J Maddy c Hyatt b Cowan	7		
I J Southcott c Hyatt b Cowan	39		
B F Smith lbw b Pratt	1		
P V Simmons c Cowan b Pratt	61		
A Haddad c Hyatt b Pratt	8		
R P A Horn b Smith	26		
C C Lewis lbw b Pratt	14		
D J Maddy not out	37		
C D Grove c Potts b Grove	6		
A D Mully lbw b Grove	0		
Extras (b 3, lb 6, nb 18)	27		
Total (102.3 overs)	395		
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-18, 2-126, 3-129, 4-247, 5-263, 6-299, 7-314, 8-371, 9-395			
BOWLING: 10.1-26.1-1	Cowan	19.4-30.2	Pratt
17.1-17.3	Smith	19.4-30.1	Grove
4-0-20.0			
ESSEX: First Innings			
P J Prichard c Wells b Maddy	18		
S D Parnell c Wells b Maddy	2		
T P Hodgson c Simmons b Wells	20		
S G Law b Maddy	7		
R C Irem c Simmons b Law	11		

of Jamie Grove, 19, some compensation for his rough treatment on the first day, but Alan Mullally, whom he dismissed first ball, was soon giving a master-class in how to bowl on this pitch.

Mullally should have struck with the first ball of the innings, which Prichard propped into, and out of, the hands of short-leg. In his second over, though, he had a confident Steve Peters caught at first slip, and his sixth brought the critical wicket of Law.

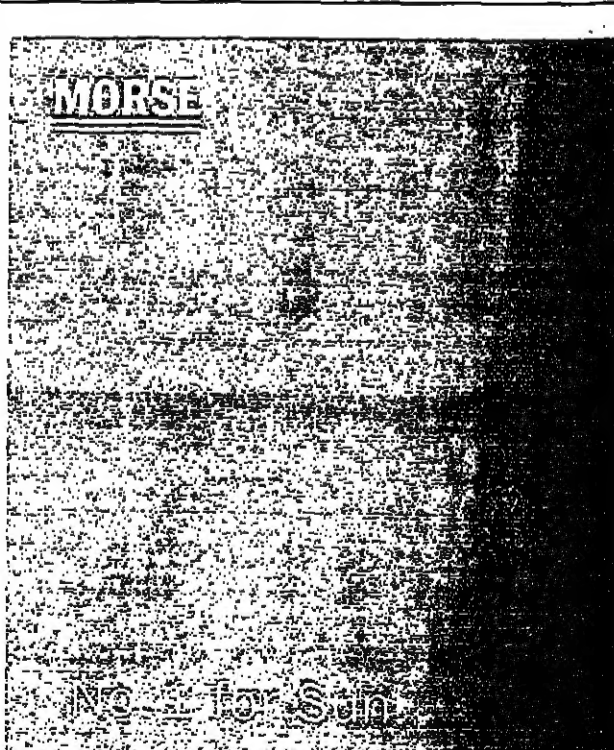
Chris Lewis, too, often dropped short, but on two occasions when he did pitch the ball up he dismissed Prichard, playing back to a yorker, and Irani, brilliantly taken by Simmons at second slip. When rain caused a third, brief delay Essex were 49 for four and in full retreat.

Tim Hodgson at least showed some resilience, spending 40 balls on ten and adding 27 for the fifth wicket with Grayson. Once Wells had divided the stand in his second over, Essex fell apart.

Three of the lower order were swept away by David Millins, who bowled an appropriate length at lively pace, but owed two of his wickets to remarkable catches by Sutcliffe, at short-leg. He will never know how he managed to cling on to a full-blooded on-drive by Mark Ilott.

There was more to come. After Prichard had once more been bowled going back, Peters fell to an acrobatic slip catch by Lewis, and Law and Irani were out playing careless shots.

Pitch battle, page 49
Smith on song, page 49



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